THE True Christians Love OF THE UNSEEN CHRIST:

OR A

Discourse chiefly tending to excite and promote the decaying Love of Christ in the hearts of Christians.

With an Appendix concerning Christs Manifestation of himself to them that Love him.

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1 *Cor.* 16. 22. *If any man Love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.*

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London, Printed by *J. R.* for *Samuel Sprint*, at the *Blew-Bell* in *Little-Brittain*, 1677.

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To the Reader.

OUr Saviour ſent an Epiſtle from heaven to the Church of Epheſus, wherein he reproveth her becauſe ſhe had left her firſt love, and threatneth the Removal of her Candleſtick, that he would take away her light, if ſhe did not recover her Love. By the ſame hand at the ſame time he ſent another Epiſtle to the Church of Laodicea, wherein he reproveth her Lukewarmneſs, and threatneth, becauſe ſhe was neither hot nor cold, he would ſpue her out of his mouth, Rev. 2. 4, 5. & 3. 15, 16. And are Chriſtians in England under no ſuch ſin, in no ſuch danger? when ſome ſcoff at the flames of love to Chriſt, like dogs that bark at the Moon ſo far above them; when the moſt nominal Chriſtians are wholly ſtrangers to this Love, whatever their notional knowledge be; the former

looking upon it as but a fancy, the latter having it onely in the Theory: and when amongſt thoſe Chriſtians who love Chriſt in ſincerity, there are ſo few that know what it is to Love Chriſt with fervour and ardency: when there is ſo General a decay of Love to Chriſt in the Land, Lord what is like to become of England *? Have we not provoked the* Lord *to take away our Candleſtick, to ſuffer the worſe than* Egyptian *darkenes to overſpread us again, and cover our Light, becauſe it ſhineth with ſuch cold beams, becauſe the Light of Knowledge in the head is accompanied with ſo little warmth of Love to Chriſt in the hearts of moſt Chriſtians? Every one will fetch water to quench fire in a general conflagration; & ſurely there is need in a day of ſuch General decay of Love to Chriſt, that ſome ſhould fetch fire, fire from heaven, & uſe bellows too, Arguments I mean, to enkindle and blow up the ſpark of Love to Chriſt, which ſeems*

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ſo ready to expire. Reader, The following diſcourſe concerning the True Chriſtians Love of the unſeen Chriſt, is not finely ſpun, and curiouſly woven with neatneſſes of wit and language; it is not flouriſhed and ſet off with variety of Metaphors, Hyperbolies, Rhetorical Elegancies, or Poetical Fancies and fragments; it is not adorned and fringed with the ſpecious ſhow of many Marginal Quotations, excerpted out of divers Authors; The diſcourſe is plain, but the Author hath endeavoured that it might be warm, his deſign being more to advance his Maſter than Himſelf in thy eſteem; and if he have leſs of thy praiſe, ſo his Lord may have more of thy love, his great end is attained. The chief part of this diſcourſe concerning the love of Chriſt is Application, and about two thirds of it Exhortation (there being generally in this knowing age more need of excitation than information) where thou haſt variety of arguments & mo-

tives to ſtir up and provoke unto the love of Chriſt, together with divers directions how to attain this love in the truth and ſtrength of it, and wherein the ſtrength of love to Chriſt ſhould evidence it ſelf. There is alſo an appendix added for further encouragement unto the love of Chriſt, concerning Chriſts manifeſtation of himſelf unto ſuch as love him. The whole diſcourſe is practical, nothing in it controverſal; not only Proteſtants, but Papiſts too will verbally acknowledge the obligation which Chriſtians have to love Chriſt, and none will oppoſe this that are true Chriſtians, none but Turks, Infidels and Devils are profeſſedly againſt it. That this little Book may be bleſſed by the Lord to be a means to warm and inflame thine heart with love to the unſeen Chriſt, is the earneſt prayer of

A hearty well-wiſher to thy ſoul.

Thomas Vincent.

The True Christians Love of the Unseen CHRIST:

1 Pet. 1. 8.

Whom having not Seen, ye Love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet Believing, ye Rejoyce with Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory.

THE Life of Christianity doth consist very much in our love unto Christ. Without Love unto Christ, we are as much without Spiritual Life, as a Carkass when the Soul is fled

from it, is without Natural Life. Faith without Love to Christ, is a dead Faith; and a Christian without Love to Christ, is a dead Christian; dead in Sins and Trespasses. Without Love to Christ, we may have the Name of Christians, but we are wholly without the Nature: we may have the Form of Godliness, but are wholly without the Power. *Give me thine Heart*, is the language of God to all the Children of Men, *Prov.* 23. 26. And *Give me thy Love*, is the language of Christ unto all his Disciples.

Christ knoweth the command and influence which Love to him, in the Truth and Strength of it, hath: How it will Engage all the other Affections of his Disciples for Him; that if he have their Love, their Desires will be chiefly after Him; their Delights will be chiefly in Him, their Hopes and Expectations will be chiefly from Him; their Hatred, Fear, Grief, Anger, will be carried forth chiefly unto Sin, as it is Offensive unto Him. He knows that Love will Engage and Employ, for him all the Powers and Faculties of their Souls; their Thoughts will be brought into Captivity and Obedience unto Him; their Understandings will be employed in Seeking and

and Finding out his Truths; their Memories will be Receptacles to retain them; their Conscience will be ready to Accuse and Excuse as his Faithfull Deputies; their Wills will Choose and Refuse according to his Direction and Revealed Pleasure. All their Senses and the Members of their Bodies, will be his Servants: their Eyes will See for him, their Ears will Hear for him, their Tongues will Speak for him, their Hands will Work for him, their Feet will Walk for him: All their Gifts and Talents will be at his Devotion and Service. If he have their Love, they will be ready to Do for him what he requireth; they will be ready to Suffer for him, whatever he calleth them unto: If they have much Love to him, they will not think much of Denying themselves; taking up his Cross and following him wherever he leadeth them, love to Christ then being so Essential unto true Christianity, so earnestly look'd for by our Lord and Master, so Powerfully Commanding in the Soul and over the whole Man, so Greatly Influential on Duty; I have made choice of this subject of *Love to Christ*, to Treat on; and my chief Endeavor herein shall be to Excite and Provoke Christians unto the Lively and Vigorous Exercise of this

this Grace of Love unto the Lord Jesus Christ; of which Incentives, there is a Great and Universal need.

The Epistle wherein my Text lyeth, was written by *Peter* the Apostle of the Circumcision, and is directed to the Strangers scattered throughout *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Asia* and *Bithynia*, as in the first *v.* of this Chapter. By these Strangers we are to understand the scattered *Jews*, who were Strangers in these several Countries where they did Inhabit. We read in the 2d of the *Acts* that there came up many of these *Jews*, from these and other Countries, unto *Jerusalem* to Worship, and in the temple hearing the Apostles speak with divers Tongues, which were of use in the divers places where they did live, and that without Instruction from Man, but as the Spirit gave them utterance; they were Amazed and Confounded: and afterward hearing *Peter* preach, through the Wonderful Power of the Spirit, three thousand of them were Converted by one Sermon unto the Christian Faith, and added to the Christian Church. When the Feast of Pentecost was over, these Converted *Jews* returned into their Countries where their several Dwellings, Families and Callings were

were: which Countries being Heatheniſh and Idolatrous, no doubt but there they met with Oppoſition and Suffering upon the account of the Chriſtian Religion which they became Zealous Profeſſors of, beſides what they endured from their own Countreymen, or Unconverted *Jews* who hated Chriſtianity more than the Heathens did. The Apoſtle doth ſeem to have a reſpect unto theſe in this Epiſtle, wherein he doth encourage them under their ſufferings for the ſake of Chriſt by many Conſolatory Arguments. In the 2d *v.* he wiſheth that Grace and Peace might be multiplyed in them and towards them, and then though their Sufferings did abound, their Conſolations would abound much more. In the 3d 4th and 5th *ver.* He bleſſeth God for his abundant Mercy towards them in begetting them unto a lively Hope of the glorious and never fading Heavenly Inheritance which was reſerved for them through Gods Infinite Grace, and unto which they were reſerved and kept through Faith by Gods infinite power. In the 6th and 7th *verſes*, he telleth them, however they were in heavineſs through manifold Temptations, that is Afflictions, which are the Worlds left-hand Temptations; yet he

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giveth them to understand that these afflictions they were but for a season; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning; they were but needful to humble them, to purifie them, to crucifie them to the world, to make them conformable to their head the Lord Jesus Christ, and that they were for the tryal of their faith, that the truth of it might appear both to themselves and others, and that the worth of it might appear how much more precious than Gold when it is tryed in the Fire, which carrying them thorow their sufferings, might be found both to their own praise and their Masters honour, at the appearing of Jesus Christ: and then the Apostle doth take occasion in the text to speak of their Love which they did bear unto this Jesus Christ, and of that unspeakable and glorious joy, which doth result from believing in him although they had no sight of him, which no trouble or affliction could overwhelm or hinder. *Whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of Glory.* Hence observe,

Doct. 1. *That it is the Property and duty of true Christians to Love Jesus Christ whom*

whom they have never ſeen. Whom having not ſeen ye Love.

Doct. 2. *That true Chriſtians do Believe in an unſeen Chriſt. In whom though now ye ſee Him not, yet believing.*

Doct. 3. *That true Chriſtians do or may rejoice in Believing with unſpeakable and glorious joy. In whom, though now ye ſee him not, yet Believing ye rejoice with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory.*

Here are three great points to be treated of. 1. Concerning the Love of Chriſtians unto Chriſt. 2. Concerning the faith of Chriſtians in Chriſt. 3. Concerning the Joy of Chriſtians in Believing. For the preſent I ſhall ſpeak only of the Love of Chriſtians unto Chriſt under the firſt Doctrine, the other two I may have opportunity to treat of afterwards.

Section. I.

Doct. *That it is the Property and duty of true Chriſtians to love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whom they have never ſeen.*

In handling of this point I ſhall ſpeak. 1. Concerning true Chriſtians who do love Jeſus Chriſt. 2. Concerning Jeſus Chriſt whom they have never ſeen, the Object of their

their Love. 3. Concerning the Love which they bare unto this unseen Christ. 4. Shew that it is the Property of true Christians to Love Jesus Christ whom they have never seen. 5. That it is their Duty to love him. 6. How they ought to love Him. 7. Why they do love Him, where I shall give the reasons of the point. 8. Make some Use and Application.

1. Concerning true Christians whose property it is to love Jesus Christ whom they have never seen, *whom having not seen yee love, ye love,* that is, ye who are true Christians, who are so in reality as well as profession; and of these true Christians that do love Christ, the Apostle doth give a description in the 2d. *ver.* where he calls them, *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through Sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* True Christians are Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, they are such whom God according to the Councel of his own will, according to his own purpose and grace, did choose from all Eternity to be a holy and peculiar people to himself, to glorifie him here on Earth, and that they might be glorifyed by him hereafter in heaven. And this election doth evidence it

self

ſelf in the Sanctification of the Spirit, true Chriſtians are ſanctified being ſeparated and ſet apart from the reſt of the world, for Gods uſe and ſervice: God hath ſealed them for himſelf, and hereby diſtinguiſhed them from all others, the Motto of which ſeal is this, *Holineſs unto the Lord.* See a deſcription of them in this reſpect, 2 Tim. 2.21. *If any man purge himſelf from theſe, he ſhall be a veſſel unto Honour, ſanctifyed and meet for the Maſters uſe, and prepared unto every good work*: they are purged from the defilement of ſin, which doth pollute and diſhonor them, they are veſſels unto honour, like thoſe of Silver and Gold in a great houſe, which are adorned with Pearls and precious ſtones; they are adorned with all ſanctifying graces, which are of more worth than the richeſt Jewels; and hereby they are both beautiful in Gods eye, and they are made meet for Gods uſe, being hereby prepared and enabled unto every good work. This the Apoſtle prays for in the behalf of the *Theſſalonians*, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 23. *And the very God of peace ſanctifie you wholly, and I pray God your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body be preſerved blameleſſe unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* True Chriſtians are ſanctifyed wholly, in their whole man, though

though they be not sanctified thorowly: they are sanctified in every part, though they are not sanctified in the highest degree. Their whole Spirit is sanctified that is the higher faculties of the soul, namely the understanding and the will: their understandings are enlightned by the Spirit unto a Spiritual discerning both of good and evil, beyond what any natural man doth or can attain unto; their wills are bowed, or rather rectified, and made straight, being enclined unto God and his Law. Their Souls are sanctified in the inferior faculties, in all the affections belonging both to the concupiscible and the irrascible appetite; their liking affections of love, desire, delight and hope are towards God and Christ and things above; their disliking affections of hatred, fear, grief and anger are towards sin. Their bodies also are sanctifyed being made members of Christ, and instruments of Righteousnes; their eyes, ears, tongues, hands, feet and every part being devoted to God and made use of for his glory; Thus true Christians are sanctified by the spirit. And they are sanctified unto obedience, the graces which are wrought by the spirit in their hearts, do appear in the obedience of their lives; the course of their lives

lives is a courſe of obedience unto the laws of Chriſt: they are ſanctified unto obedience and they are ſanctified unto ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt; God hath ſet them apart to be ſprinkled with the blood of the immaculate Lamb, who takes away ſin that they might be pardoned and ſaved, ſuch are true Chriſtians who love Chriſt whom they have not ſeen.

Section. II.

Secondly CConcerning the object of true Chriſtians Love, and that is Jeſus Chriſt whom they have never ſeen. This Jeſus Chriſt whom they love is the Eternal Son of God, the ſecond Perſon in the glorious Trinity, who in time aſſumed our Humane Nature, clothed himſelf with our mortal Fleſh, lived like a ſervant in a mean condition, died like a malefactor the curſed Death of the Croſs, and all for our ſakes, for our ſins, roſe again the third day for our Juſtification, aſcended up into heaven after forty days, and there is ſet down at the right hand of the throne of the Majeſty on high, to make interceſſion for us, and to make preparation there for our reception, into the glorious Manſions and Eter-

Eternal Habitations, which are in the Fathers house. He is called Jesus from the Hebrew word יְהוֹשׁוּעַ which signifieth *to save* because *he saveth his people from their sins, Matth.* 1. 21. He is called Christ from the Greek word χρίω which signifieth to anoint, he being anointed by the Father with the Spirit and with Power, to be Mediator between God and Man, to be the great Prophet, and Priest, and King, of the Church. This Jesus Christ Christians have not seen with the eye of sense; indeed some Christians in the primitive times, as the Apostles who were of his family and other disciples who conversed with him frequently, did see Christ with the eye of sense, but it was in his state of Humiliation, when he was here upon the Earth, not in his state of Exaltation, now he is in Heaven; yet some have seen Christ after his Ascention, namely *Paul* at his conversion, and *Stephen* the Proto Martyr before he dyed; but none have had a perfect sight with bodily eyes of the Glory which is upon Christ's body, the lustre of which is so great that none can behold it in this state of weakness and imperfection, and live. But whatever sight some Christians have had formerly, no Christians now have a sight of Christ's Person; they

they have heard of him with the hearing of the Ear, but they have not ſeen him with the ſeeing of the Eye; they have ſeen Repreſentations of Chriſt in the Sacrament, but they have never ſeen his Perſon that is repreſented; they have ſeen his Image upon their Fellow-Chriſtians, but they have not ſeen the original from whom this Image hath been drawn. Some Chriſtians have been in *Judea*, and ſeen the place where the Lord lived; and at *Jeruſalem* and ſeen the place where the Lord dyed; and Viſited the place of his Sepulchre where the Lord for a time did lye: and they have ſeen the Mount whence the Lord Aſcended; but no Chriſtians now alive have been in *Jeruſalem*, and on Mount *Sion*, which is above, to ſee where the Lord now is in his Glory. It is this Jeſus Chriſt whom Chriſtians have not ſeen, that is the Object of their Love.

Section III.

Thirdly, Concerning the Love which True Chriſtians do bear unto this unſeen Chriſt. Love is the going forth of the Heart unto the Object Beloved; and the Love which True Chriſtians do

do bear unto Jesus Christ, is a Grace wrought by the Spirit in their hearts, whereby upon discovery and believing Apprehensions of Christs infinite Loveliness and Excellency, his Matchless Love Grace and Mercy; their Hearts do go forth towards him in Earnest desires after Union to him, and Communion with him, wherein they take chief Complacency; and this accompanied with a yeilding and dedication of themselves unto his will and service.

1. *The Love of Christians unto Christ, is a Grace wrought in their Hearts by the Spirit.* It is a Flower most Sweet and Fragrant, but there is no Seed of it in the Nature of any Man since the Fall, it is planted in the Soul by the Spirit of God. Love to Christ is a Divine Spark, that comes down from above; a fire which is kindled by the breath of the Lord, whose Effence is Love.

2. *The Ground of this Love to Christ, is the discovery and believing Apprehensions of Christs Lovelinesse and Love.* There must be first a discovery of Christ as a suitable Object for Love, and not a bare Notion of this, but believing apprehensions of it, that Christ is Infinitely lovely, Superlatively Excellent; and that his love is Match-

Matchless and Transcendent towards the Children of Men, that there is a Treasury in him, and a Storehouse of all Graces, and the most Needfull and Rich Supplies; otherwise there will be no going forth of the Heart in love unto him.

3. *The Actings of Christians love to Christ, is in their desires after Union unto, and Communion with Christ.* It is the Nature of love to desire Union to the Object beloved; especially of this love to Christ: and this Union being attained, the desires are after Communion with Christ, Converse and Fellowship with him; no Converse is so desirable as with the Persons whom we most dearly love: and this Communion being attained, there is chief Complacency therein, the Soul doth sweetly rest and repose it self in Christ, and rejoyceth in his presence and love.

4. *The Concomitant of this Love which True Christians have unto Christ, is a yielding and dedication of themselves unto his will and Service.* Lovers do give themselves unto those whom they love; this accompanieth the Marriage-Union: and such as love Christ, they are Espoused and joyned unto Christ; and they give themselves unto Christ to be his, and wholly at his

his disposé, as the Wife giveth her self unto the disposé of her Husband.

Section IV.

Fourthly, THe Fourth thing is to shew, that it is the Property of all true Christians, to Love this unseen Christ. True Christians are differenced and distinguished, not only from all Heathens and Infidels, but also from all bare Nominall Christians, by their Love to Jesus Christ. It is the Property of Covetous Persons to love Worldly Wealth and Riches: It is the Property of Ambitious Persons, to love Worldly Honour and Dignities: It is the Property of Voluptuous Persons, to love Sensual Pleasures and Delights: And it is the Property of True Christians to Love Jesus Christ whom they have never seen. None but such as are True Christians do Love Christ, and all those that are True Christians do love him. The Lovelinesse of Christ doth appear not to the Eye of Sense, but to the Eye of Faith; they that do not see him with this Eye, they cannot love him; and they that do see him with this Eye, they cannot choose but love him. Such as do not love Christ, it is

is not because Christ wants Beauty, but because they are blind. Now all true Christians have this Eye of Faith, to discern Christ's Excellencies; and none but True Christians have this Eye; the Essence of Christianity doth consist in Believing: Reason makes us Men, but Faith makes us True Christians. It being therefore the property of True Christians to believe, it is their property also to love this Unseen Christ.

Section V.

Fifthly, THe Fifth thing is to shew, that it is the Duty of all True Christians to love this unseen Christ. This will appear if you look into *John* 21. 15. 16, 17. *Peter* was one of the boldest and forwardest of all Christs disciples, but he had been withal too self-confident, which was the introduction unto and laid the foundation for his fall and thrice shameful denial of his Master; a look from his Lord put him in remembrance, and brought him to Repentance with bitter weeping for his sin so soon as it was committed. After our Saviour was risen from the dead, he appears unto *Peter* with other of his disciples

and

and in this place he asketh the same question in the same words three times, *Simon Son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* Whereby as he doth tacitly upbraid him for his great sin in his three times denyal of him (which had there not been a defect in his love, he would never have done) so he doth also give a signification that love to himself is the great duty, and the great thing which he doth look for in all his disciples.

Section. VI.

THe 6th. thing is to shew how Christians ought to Love this unseen Christ.

1. Christians ought to love Christ with Sincerity of Love, *Eph.* 6. 24. *Grace be with all them that Love our Lord Jesus Christ in Sincerity.* It was the great sin of *Judah*, *Jer.* 3. 10. That *she turned not to the Lord with her whole heart, but feignedly*: so it is a great sin to love Christ with a feigned and hypocritical love; the love of Christians to Christ ought to be sincere in regard of the habit & inward workings of it, they must love him not only in show, word, and outward profession, but their love must be cordial in the heart and so a love indeed and in truth: and the love of Christi-

Chriſtians to Chriſt muſt be ſincere in regard of the object of it, they muſt love Chriſt for himſelf and not chiefly for what they get by him; to love Chriſt only for Temporal gain is hypocritical love, to love Chriſt cheifly for other gain is not ſo ſpiritual, but to love Chriſt for his own excellencies and perfections is moſt ſincere and generous, this ſincerity of love to Chriſt is every ones duty.

2. Chriſtians ought to love Chriſt with Supremacy of love, they muſt place him in the higheſt ſeat of their hearts; he is a Great King, and he looks for the Throne, and that all Creatures ſhould be placed beneath him, and ſtand at his Footſtool: Math. 10. 37. *He that loveth Father or Mother more than mee, is not worthy of Me; he that loveth Son or Daughter more than Me, is not Worthy of Me.* They are the words of our Saviour: Chriſtians may love Father and Mother, the Law of God and Nature doth require it; they may love Husband and Wife, the Word of God enjoyneth the Husband to love his Wife as his own Body, and as Chriſt loved the Church; they may love Sons, Daughters, Brethren, Siſters, Kindred, Friends, yea Enemies, and they ought to do it; yet all muſt be with a Sub-

ordinate love, but they must love Christ with their chief love; otherwise they are not worthy to stand in the Relation of Disciples.

3. Christians ought to love Christ with Ardency of Love: Luk. 24. 32. *And they said one to another, did not our Hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the Way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?* This burning love Christ enkindled in the heart of his Disciples, and this burning love Christ requireth of all Christians; *Cant.* 8. 6, 7. *Love is strong as Death, the coals thereof are coals of Fire which hath a vehement Flame. Many Waters cannot quench Love, neither can the Floods drown it.* Such a strong vehement ardent flaming love Christians should have unto Jesus Christ, which all the waters of Affliction may not be able to quench, which no Flouds of Temptations or Persecution may be able to drown and overwhelm. Therefore

4. Christians ought to love Christ with Constancy of Love. Having begun to love him, they ought to continue to love him, and to love him unto the end; as they ought to be constant in their Obedience, and to persevere in their other Graces; so they

they ought to be conſtant and to perſevere in this Grace of love to Chriſt.

SECT. VII.

Seventhly, THE Seventh thing is to ſhew, why true Chriſtians do Love Chriſt, whom they have never ſeen.

Rea. 1. True Chriſtians do love Chriſt becauſe of the Need which they have of him. Men do love their Neceſſary Food, without which their Bodies would ſtarve with Hunger: Men do love their Neceſſary Raiment and Habitations, without which in Winter Seaſons their Bodies would ſtarve with Cold. Men do love their Neceſſary Friends, upon whom (under God) they have their Dependance, and from whom they have all their Subſiſtence: But no Thing in the World, or Friend in the World, is ſo Needful to the Body, as the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is unto the Soul: and as the Excellencies of the Soul, are far beyond the Excellencies of the Body; ſo the Neceſſities of the Soul, are far beyond the Neceſſities of the Body: which Neceſſities can be anſwered by none but Jeſus Chriſt; and therefore True Chriſtians do

love him. At first Conversion when they were convinced of Sin, awakened out of their carnal security, O what Need had they, and did they see they had of Christ! they perceived themselves to be lost, and that it was Christ only that could save them; they felt the Wounds of Conscience, and it was Christ only that could Heal them; they feared the Wrath of a Sin-revenging God, and it was Christ only that could Deliver them. The Remission, Reconciliation and Salvation, which they had by Christ, did lay the first Foundation of a most endeared love unto Christ; And still they perceive a continual need of Christ, to procure daily pardon for them, and to convey dayly supplyes of Grace unto them: They have Need of Christ, when they are Dark to Enlighten them; when they are Dead to Quicken them; when they are Streightned, to Enlarge them; when they are Weak, to Strengthen them; when they are Sad, to Comfort them; when they are Tempted, to Succour them; when they are Fallen, to Raise them; when they are in Doubts, to Resolve them; when they are under Fears, to Encourage them; when they Stagger, to Establish them; when they Wander, to Restore them.

Christ

Chriſt, and None but Chriſt, can do all this, and more than this for them: and therefore becauſe of the need and uſefulneſs of Chriſt, true Chriſtians do love him.

Rea. 2, True Chriſtians do love an unſeen Chriſt, becauſe of the Lovelineſs of Chriſt; which Lovelineſs though it be not and cannot here be ſeen by the Eye of the Body, yet it is evident unto the Eye of Faith: ſee the Deſcription which is given of Chriſt the Beloved, by his Spouſe the Church, *Cant.* 5. 9. The Daughters of *Jeruſalem* there enquire of the love-ſick Spouſe, *What is thy Beloved more than another Beloved, O thou faireſt amongſt Women? what is thy Beloved more than another Beloved, that thou doſt ſo charge us?* Hereupon the Spouſe giveth a Deſcription, *ver.* 10. *My Beloved is White and Ruddy, the cheifeſt among ten thouſand*; and after ſhe had ſet forth his Graces, Beauties, and Excellent Accompliſhments, in Metaphors taken from beauties in the ſeveral parts of mans body, in the 11, 12, 13, and 14, *verſes*, ſhe concludeth in the 15 and 16 *verſes*, *His Countenance is as* Lebanon, *Excellent as the Cedars. His Mouth is moſt ſweet, yea he is altogether Lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is*

my Friend O Daughters of Jerusalem. The Spouse is here acknowledged to be the Fairest amongst Women, and not only by the Daughters of *Jerusalem*, but her Beloved, who had a more curious eye, doth both commend her loveliness and admire it: *ch.* 6.4, 5. *Thou art beautiful O my Love as* Tirzah, *comely as Jerusalem: Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me,* and *ver.* 10. *Who is this that looketh forth as the Morning, fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun, and Terrible as an Army with Banners?* But what beauty is there then in the Beloved? if the Church be beautiful beyond all other of the Children of men, how beautiful is Jesus Christ from whom the Church doth derive all its comeliness? He is said to be *White and Ruddy*, that shews the beauty of his Face; and his Countenance is said to be *as Lebanon, and like the lofty Cedars thereof*, that shews the Majesty of his Face. His *Mouth* is said to be *most Sweet*; and sweet it is indeed, in regard of the Gracious words which proceed from it; no Doctrine so sweet as Christ's Doctrine, no Precepts so sweet as Christs Precepts, no Promises so sweet as Christs Promises. But to sum up all Excellencies and Perfections in a word he is said to be *altogether Lovely*, there

there is no Person or Thing in the World that is most lovely, which can properly be called altogether lovely: Many defects may be found in the most amiable persons, and much insufficiency may be found in the most desirable things; but Christ is altogether lovely; unlovely in no respect, there being no Spot or Blemish, no Defect or Imperfection to be found in him: and he is lovely in every respect, there is an incomparable and Transcendent amiableness in Christs person in every regard. In the person of Christ the Humane Nature and the Divine Nature are in Conjunction, he is most lovely in regard of both. His Humane Nature is compounded of Body and Soul. His Body is most Beautiful, a most Glorious Beauty and lustre is put upon it: whatever it were in his state of humiliation, be sure it hath a Glorious Beauty now in his state of Exaltation. It is called σῶμα τῆς δόξης a Glorious Body, *Phil.* 3. 21. If the Face of *Moses* did shine with resplendent Glory, after his conversing Forty dayes with God in Mount *Sinai* which was Below; how doth the Body of Christ shine, which hath been above Sixteen hundred years in Mount *Sion* which is Above? I am perswaded that Christs Body is the most Beautifull of all Visible Creatures. But

the Beauty of Christs Soul doth Excel: No creature whatever, hath such shining Excellencies as are in the Soul of Christ, All the Excellencies that are, or ever were in any creature, are like a Feather laid in the Ballance with the exceeding weight of his Glorious Excellencies and Perfections. Christ Excelled the most Excellent Men that ever lived, as to Spiritual Endowments, when he was here upon the Earth: He Excelled *Moses* in Meekness, *Solomon* in Wisdom, *Job* in Patience; and how much doth he Excel now he is in Heaven? He Excelleth not only the Spirits of just men made Perfect, but also the most glorious and Holy Angels that never sinned. If any creatures have Wisdom, it is but a Beam, Christ is the Sun; If they have Goodness, it is but a drop, in Christ is the Ocean; If they have Holiness, it is but a Spark or dark shaddow, Christ is the Brightness of his Fathers Glory: If they have the Spirit, they have it but In some measure, the Spirit is given to Christ without Measure *Joh.* 3. 34. Christ is most lovely in his Manhood, so nearly united unto his Godhead; and how lovely is he in his Godhead? as God he is Equall in all Glorious Excellencies with the Father. Christs Godhead implyeth Excellency of Being,

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he calleth himself *I am, Joh.* 8.28. Excellency of Glory, therefore called *the Lord of Glory*, 1 *Cor.* 2.8. and *King of Glory*, Psal.24.7. *Lift up your heads O yee Gates, and be ye lift up, ye Everlasting Doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.* This is Interpreted by some, to be spoken of Christs Ascension, and the Angels and Saints making way for his Triumphant Entrance, and Possession of his Heavenly Pallace. Many Descriptions are given in the new Testament, of this lovely Person; I shall mention only one, *Col.* 1. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. *Who is the Image of the invisible God, the First-born of every creature; For by him were all things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, Visible and Invisible, whether they be Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers: all things were made by him and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the Head of the Body, the Church: who is the beginning, the First-born from the Dead, that in all things he might have the Preeminence. For it pleased the Father, that in him all fulness should dwell.* If we read, believe and consider this great Description of Christ, we must needs see and say, that Christ is most Excellent and Amiable,

and that no beloved is like to the Beloved of true Christians: therefore it is that true Christians do love Christ, because of his lovelineſs.

Rea. 3. True Christians do love Christ, becauſe of His love. His love which he doth bear to them. He loves them with a First love, and with a Free love; He loves them with a tender and compaſſionate love, with an active or doing love, with a paſſive or ſuffering love: His love is Infinite without Bounds or Limits; it is Superlative without compariſon; Tranſcendent beyond comprehenſion; Everlaſting without change, and which will have no end or concluſion. He lov'd them when they were polluted in their ſins, and waſht them with his own blood; he loved them when they were Naked in their Souls, and clothed them with the Robes of his Righteouſneſs; He loves them in their ſickneſs and ſorrows, and is their Comforter; He loves them in their wants and Straits, and is their Benefactor, He loves them in Life, and is the Life of their Souls; He loves them at Death, and is the Stay of their Hearts; And he loves them after Death, and will be their Portion for ever. There is great Reaſon that true Chriſtians ſhould

should love Christ, because of his loveliness; and there is further reason that they should love him, because of his love, especially when both are incomparable, both are incomprehensible. I shall further speak (God willing) unto both these with other reasons, under the motives in the Exhortation to excite Christians to the love of Christ.

SECT. VIII.

Use 1. FOR Information hence learn, that there are but few true Christians in the world, because there are so few that love this *unseen Christ*. There are many Christians in Name, few Christians in deed and in truth. The time hath been when openly to profess the Name of a Christian, did argue true love unto Jesus Christ; I mean in the Primitive times, when Christians were Persecuted by the Heathens, as in the Ten first dreadful Persecutions under the Heathen Emperours; when the world was watered with Christian blood, then especially at some times and in some yea most places, whoever openly acknowledged themselves to be Christians they

they exposed themselves unto Imprisonments, Racks, Tortures, Burnings and the most cruel deaths; It was the Truth and Strength of Love unto Jesus Christ, which carried them thorow such great sufferings, as many did in those dayes undergo for the sake of Jesus Christ: But now there are Multitudes of bare nominal Christians, they call themselves Christians being baptized in Christ's name, but they are altogether without love to Christ, whose Name they bare: Surely there are but few, not only in the Christian World, but even in *England* (where Christianity is to be found in as great purity as in any place) that love Jesus Christ in sincerity. No grossely ignorant persons do truly love Christ; such as don't know Christ, they can't love him; *ignoti nulla cupido*, there is no desire after, nor love unto an unknown thing: An unknown evil cannot be hated, and an unknown good cannot be loved. No grossely Erroneous persons, do truely love Christ; such as do not receive Christ's Truths, they cannot love Christ's Person: Joh. 14. 23. *If any man love me he will keep my words.* The words of Christ do include, not only the words of his Precepts, but also the words of his Doctrine; Such as erre grossely, I mean in the Fundamental

mental Truths of Christianity, they are no friends to Christ, but his Enemies, so far are they from true love unto him. No grosely wicked persons, do truly love Christ; such as profane persons, who Blaspheme the name of God in their hideous Oaths; the love of Christ doth teach an Holy Awe and Reverence of Gods Name; such are Persecuters of Gods people for Righteousnes sake. How can they love the Head, that hate the Members? Christ accounteth himself to be persecuted, in the persecution of his Members; *Act.* 9. 4. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me,* and v. 5. *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*: and surely persecutors of Christ do not love Christ. Such are Scoffers at Religion, who deride Holines and mock at the name of a Saint or Godly person, whereby they evidently shew their contempt of the Holines of Christ, from whom the Saints derive all theirs; and how can they love Christ that do contemne him and his Image. No unrighteous persons do truly love Christ, whether they be so in regard of distributative justice, or in regard of commutative justice; whether they be unrighteous in Execution of judgement, in distribution of Rewards or Punishments, & whether they

be unrighteous in their Traffick and Dealings; Chriſt ſtrictly requireth juſtice and Righteouſneſs, and how can they love him, that do not keep this Commandement? No Covetous perſons do truly love Chriſt; the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 Joh. 2. 15. *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* And I may ſay that if any man love the world, (that is, with his chief love) the love of the Son is not in him; the love cannot be chiefly ſet upon things below here on Earth, and upon Chriſt who is above in Heaven. No Licentious perſons do truly love Chriſt: no Drunkards, Adulterers, or any that indulge themſelves in unlawful delights; the love of Chriſt doth teach us to deny ſuch Luſts, and to Mortifie them. No meer civil perſons that are unconverted, no Hypocrites that have a forme of Godlineſs, but are without the power of it, do truly love Chriſt: the former may be loving and courteous unto men, but they have no love to Chriſt; the latter may Profeſs love to Chriſt, and Seem to love him, but they do not really love him. In a word none who are under the reigning power of any ſin, do truly love Chriſt: The Reign of ſin is in the heart, and this is inconſiſtent with the love of Chriſt in the Heart. Now

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let us ſeparate all theſe forementioned perſons, from the reſt; Groſſely Ignorant perſons, groſſely erroneous perſons, groſſely wicked perſons, the Profane, the Perſecutors of Gods people, the Scoffers at Religion, all Unrighteous perſons, all Covetous Perſons, Drunkards, Adulterers, and all Licentious Perſons; meer Civil perſons, Hypocrites, and all that are under the reigning power of ſin, and how few will there be left that do truly love Chriſt! and by Conſequence there will appear but very few that are true Chriſtians.

SECT. IX.

Uſe. 2. FOR Examination. Here you may know whether you are true Chriſtians by the Tryall of your love unto Jeſus Chriſt. Examine your ſelves therefore, whether you love Jeſus Chriſt whom you have never ſeen; the moſt in the world do love truly thoſe perſons and things only which they have ſeen; but can you ſay that you ſincerely and chiefly, do love Jeſus Chriſt whom you have not ſeen? the love of the moſt doth ariſe from the notice which the Eye doth give of the

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Objects beloved; but doth your love arise from the notice which the Ear hath given by the word, of the Amiableness which here is in Christ?

Qu. *How may we know whether we have true love to Jesus Christ?*

Ans. You may know the truth of your love to Jesus Christ, 1 By your desires after Christs presence. 2 By your prizing and frequenting those wayes wherein Christ is to be found, and seeking him therein. 3 By your love of Christs image. 4 By your Obedience to Christs Commandements.

First, *By your desires after Christs Presence*; wherever there is a great love to any person, there is a desire after the presence of that person: do you sincerely and earnestly desire Christs presence? there is a twofold presence of Christ, His gracious presence here, and his Glorious presence at the last day.

1. There is Christs Gracious presence here, Joh. 14. 18. *I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you.* You desire that such Friends and Relations would come unto you, but do you desire chiefly that Christ would come unto you?

Christ

Chriſt cometh to his Diſciples in a way of gracious communication, in a way of Gracious Manifeſtation, and in a way of ſweet Conſolation which doth reſult from both.

1 Do you deſire that Chriſt would come unto you in a way of Gracious communication? are your deſires after communication of Spiritual Light from Chriſt to teach and guide you; of Spiritual Life from Chriſt to quicken and encourage you, of Spiritual Strength from Chriſt, to ſupport you under Burdens, and Enable you unto Duties? do you earneſtly deſire communications of all kinds, and further degrees of grace out of that fullneſs of Grace which is in Chriſt? do you Hunger and Thirſt after Chriſts Righteouſneſs, not only that it may be imputed to you for your Juſtification, but alſo that it may be more and more imparted unto you for your further Sanctification, that you might be brought and hereby wrought into a more perfect conformity and likeneſs unto Jeſus Chriſt: this is an Evidence of true love.

2 Do you deſire that Chriſt would come unto you in a way of Gracious Manifeſtation? Joh. 14. 21. *He that loveth me, ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him.*

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Do you Earnestly desire the fulfilling of this promise? that Christ would discover to you more of the loveliness of his person, and of the love of his Heart? are you grieved when your beloved doth withdraw himself? when the curtain is drawn, and a cloud doth interpose between you and this Sun of Righteousness; when he Hideth and Veileth his Face from you? and do you long after Christs returns, and the Discoveries of himself unto you? *Come Lord Jesus, Come quickly; Be as a Roe or young Hart, upon the Mountains of Spices; Leap over the Mountains, and Skip over the Hills, and make haste unto my Soul, which is sick of Love for thee in thy Absence from me: O that I might see thy Face which is so Fair! that I might hear thy Voice which is so Sweet! that I might feel thy Presence which is so Refreshing! O that I might behold thy Heart-ravishing Smiles! Say Lord that I am thine, and thou art mine; that thou hast loved me, and given thy self for me; that thy love to me was from Everlasting, and that it is Unchangeable.* Are these or such like, the breathings of your Souls? Such are the breathings of love to Christ.

3 Do you desire that Christ would come unto you in a way of sweet consolation,

on, which doth result from this communication and Manifestation? are you desirous after the Oil of Gladness, which Christ is Anointed with? that he would give you of the Unction of the Spirit, not only to Sanctifie you, but also to comfort you? do you desire that your Hearts might be filled with Spiritual joyes, the joyes of the Holy Ghost, which are unspeakable and full of Glory? do you desire the comforts which Christ doth give, beyond all the comforts which the World and the Flesh can give? the comforts which come in at the door of Faith, beyond all the comforts that come in at the door of Sense; those joyes which are in Christ, beyond all joyes that can be found in the most sweet and desireable creature-enjoyment? this evidenceth true love to Christ. Thus do you desire Christs Gracious presence.

2. And do you desire also Christs glorious presence at the Last day? When he promiseth, *Surely I come quickly*, can your hearts make answer as *Rev.* 22. 20. *Amen, even so come Lord Jesus*? are you glad you live so near the End of the World, that the Lord is at hand, that the coming of the Lord draweth nearer and nearer every day? can you lift up your heads with joy, when you look towards the place

place where the Lord Jesus Christ is, at *the right hand of the Throne of the Majesty on High*; and think with comfort, that *yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not now tarry much longer*; that within a while *Christ will descend from Heaven with a shout*, the Lord with the *Sound of the Trumpet*, and that your Eyes shall *see him in the brightness of his Glory and Majesty?* Do you look and long for the day of Christ's glorious appearance from heaven, when you shall be awakened out of your Graves (where you may take a short sleep before) and be gathered together by the Angels, and be caught up in the clouds, and there (in shining Garments of Immortality on your Bodies and of Christs unspotted Righteousness in your Souls) be brought with Shoutings and Acclamations of Joy and Triumph into his Presence, who will then acquit you Graciously from all Sin and Punishment, own you openly for his Faithful Servants, crown you Gloriously before the whole World, and receive you to Live and Reign with him to all Eternity? Have you such desires as these? If some of you say, you are afraid of Christs Glorious appearance, lest then you should be rejected because you fear you are not ready

dy and prepared; yet can you say also from your Hearts, that you Desire above all things that you may be ready, that you Endeavour to make ready, that it is your Grief you are no more ready, and that if you were ready, and were assured of your Interest in Christ, you could desire that Christ would come immediately; and that you desire no greater Happiness and Felicity, than to live with Christ in Glory; and that you account the Presence of Christ in Heaven to be the Happiness of Heaven? These are Evidences of true desires after Christ's Glorious presence, and of sincere love to Christ.

Secondly, You may know your love to Christ, by your Prizing and Frequenting those wayes wherein Christ is to be found, and seeking him therein. Such are the wayes of his Ordinances both publick and private. Christ's way is in his Sanctuary, and in his Ordinances he may be found; do you give your attendance unto Ordinances, Publick prayer, the Preaching of the word, the Sacrament of the Lords Supper? and do you prize these Ordinances becaus of the Stamp of Christ's Institution upon them, becaus of Christ's presence in them, and becaus they

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are a meanes of bringing you and Christ together? and when you are under Ordinances, do you diligently seek after Christ in Ordinances? Don't you rest in the outside and carnall part of Ordinances, in meeting with Gods People there? or do you design, desire and endeavor after something more inward and Spiritual and incomparably sweet, that you meet with Christ there, that you may have Fellowship with the Father and the Son therein? and upon this account can you say as *David, How amiable are thy Tabernacles O Lord!* and *A day in thy Courts is better than a Thousand,* Psal. 84. 1, And, *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the House of the Lord all the dayes of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple*; Psal. 27. 4. Do you also seek after Christ in your Families, and in your Closets? do you seek him in secret prayer and meditation? your love to Christ doth express it self in your desires; your desires do shew themselves in your seeking after Christ in his wayes.

Thirdly, you may know your love to Christ, by your love of Christ's Image: there is the Image of Christ on his Word, and

and there is the Image of Christ on his People.

1. Do you love the Image of Christ on his Word? as *Cæsar's* Coin did bear *Cæsar's* Image and Superscription, so the Word of the Scriptures, which is the Word of Christ, doth bear Christ's Image and Superscription. Do you love the Scriptures becaufe of Christ's Image which is upon them? do you love the Word of Doctrine in the Scripture, becaufe of the Image of Christs Truth and Wisdom upon it? do you love the Word of Precepts in the Scriptures, becaufe of the Image of Christ's Holineſs upon it? do you love the Word of Threatnings in the Scriptures, becaufe of the Image of Christ's Righteouſneſs upon it? do you love the Word of Promiſes in the Scriptures, becaufe of the Image of Christ's Goodneſs, Grace and Love upon it? You have Christ's Word in your Bibles, and ſometimes ſounding in your Ears, but doth the Word of Christ dwell in your Hearts? you receive Christs word in the Light of it, do you receive his Word in the Love of it?

2. Do you love Christ's Image on his People? If you love not your Brother whom you have ſeen, how can you love your

your Lord whom you have not seen? All Christ's Disciples do bear Christ's Image; if you love the Original you will love the Picture, although it be but imperfectly drawn; If you love the perfect Goodness and Holiness which is in Christ, you will love the Goodness and Holiness which you see in the Saints, although they have it but in an imperfect Measure: do you love Christ's Disciples? and that because of Christ's Image, although they differ from you in some opinions which are circumstantial?

Fourthly, You may know your love to Christ, by your Obedience unto his Commandements, Joh. 14. 15. *If you love me keep my Commandements*; and *ver.* 21. *He that hath my Commandements and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.* You Have Christ's Commandements, do you Keep them? you Know them, do you Practice them? your Love to Christ is known by your Obedience unto Christ. If Christ be your Beloved, he is also your Lord; if you have true affection for him, you yeild Subjection unto him: If you Love Christ, you are carefull to Please Christ; you are not the Servants of the Flesh, to take care to please the Flesh; but

but you are the ſervants of Chriſt, to take care above all perſons and all thing to pleaſe Chriſt; if you love Chriſt you are fearful of giving juſt occaſion of offence unto men, but above all you are fearful of diſpleaſing and offending your Lord. Do you labour ſo to walk that you may pleaſe Chriſt in the way of ſincere and univerſal obedience? are you hearty in your obedience unto Chriſt? have you a reſpect to all his Commandments? is it your greif that you fall ſhort in your obedience unto Chriſt? if you can ſay in the preſence of the Lord, and your hearts do not give your tongues the lye, that you don't live and allow your ſelves in the practice of any known ſin which Chriſt forbiddeth, nor in the neglect of any known duty which Chriſt commandeth, this is a ſure evidence of true love to Jeſus Chriſt. Thus for the tryal of your love unto Chriſt.

Section III.

Uſe 3. FOr reproof.

1. Of all ſuch as have no love at all unto this unſeen Chriſt; and will not the uſe of Information, together

with the use of tryal leave a conviction upon many of you that you are without this love? Suffer then the word of reproof; what, are you Creatures made By Christ, and made For Christ, and yet have no love to him? are you Rational Creatures, have you souls capable of knowing him and loving him, and yet have no love? are you Christians and not love Christ? baptized in Christ's Name, and yet have you no love to Christ's person? are some of you Professors, and yet not love Christ? make a show of devotion, and yet without any true affection to the object of your worship? Sinners though you have not seen Christ, yet have you not heard of him? and have you not heard enough to engage and draw forth your love unto Christ. What do you think? is there such a person as Jesus Christ, or is there not? have you no Bibles? and if you have, have you not read therein the History concerning Jesus Christ? and what do you think of that History, is it true or is it false? do you think the Gospel to be a cunningly devised fable? are not the Scriptures which contain this Gospel, the very word of the true God who cannot lye? are there not such characters of Divinity upon them, as are sufficient to evince

vince their divine original to any that ſearch into them, and do not willfully ſhut their eyes againſt the light which there doth ſhine? And if it be ſo that there is indeed ſuch a perſon as Jeſus Chriſt (as there is nothing more true) how is it that you have no love unto him? do not the Scriptures reveal and ſet forth Chriſt, as the moſt excellent and amiable perſon? and yet do you not love him? can you love perſons and things that are but Imperfectly lovely, and not love Jeſus Chriſt who is Altogether lovely? can you love one of great honour that hath but ſome inferior power and authority, and not love Jeſus Chriſt, who is the Lord of Glory, who hath All power and authority both in Heaven and Earth? can you love ſuch as have Wiſdom and Learning though it be terrene, and not love Jeſus Chriſt who is the wiſdom of the Father, who knoweth all things, and whoſe wiſdom is divine? can you love ſuch as are liberal and bountiful, and not love Chriſt whoſe bounty is ſuperlative, and whoſe gifts are moſt rich and tranſcendent? can you love friends that are kind, and not love Jeſus Chriſt who is the beſt friend that ever the children of men had? can you love a Benefactor that feeds you, and cloathes you,

and giveth money to you, and yet not love Christ who offereth to feed your hunger-starv'd souls with the bread of life, to cloth your naked souls with the robes of His Righteousness, and to give the spiritual Riches of Grace to you, the least dram of which is of more worth than all the riches of the Earth? can you love Riches and not love Christ in whom there are treasures, and by whom you may have not only spiritual riches here, but also the heavenly inheritance hereafter? can you love honours, and not love Christ by whom you may have the highest dignities, the honour of children to the King of Heaven now, and a Crown of Glory in the other world? can you love liberty and not love Christ by whom you may be made free from the Slavery of the Devil and your own lusts? can you love safety & not love Christ who is the only Saviour of mankind, and who alone puts you in safety from the reach of the worst of Enemies, & the worst of Evils? can you love peace and not love Christ by whom you may have peace with God, and peace in your own conscience? can you love pleasures and delights, and not love Christ by whom you may have joys unspeakable and full of glory, besides those everlasting plea-

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ſures which are to come? without love to Chriſt you are under the guilt of all your ſins; neither your orginal ſin, nor any of your actual ſins are pardoned, they all lye upon your own ſcore, and you muſt anſwer for all your ſelves, and how fearful is your account like to be! without love to Chriſt you are under the curſe, not only under the curſe of the Law for your breach of the Law, but alſo under the curſe of the Goſpel for diſobedience to this command of the Goſpel which requireth you to love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 16. 22. *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be Anathama Maranatha,* that is, let him be curſed, till the Lord come, and when the Lord cometh will he take off the curſe from you? no, he will come in flaming fire to take vengeance upon you, having threatned then to puniſh all ſuch with everlaſting deſtruction, as ſhall be found to have diſobeyed the Goſpel; and what then is like to become of you? *Sodom* and *Gomorrha* thoſe wicked Cities will then be puniſhed dreadfully, with a worſe fire than that which was rained down from heaven, and conſumed their perſons & habitations together; I mean, with the fire of Hell, which will be kindled and kept alive un-

to Eternity by the breath of the Almighty; but you who do not love the Lord Jesus Christ notwithstanding all discoveries of him, invitations to him, and proffers of kindnesses by him, you will be punished more dreadfully than the wicked *Sodomites.* it will be more tollerable in the day of Judgment for them than for you; the torments of Hell will be intollerable by any, but they will be most intollerable by Gospel-sinners; the fire of Hell will burn upon you the most fiercely, and the scourge of Conscience will lash you the most furiously. Consider this all yee that have no love to Christ, otherwise when he cometh to judgment he will tear you to pieces and there will be none to deliver you: if you have not the sweet fire of love to Christ enkindled in your hearts here, you will be thrown into the dreadfull fire of Hell which will burn you Everlastingly.

2. This reproves such of you as have some love, but it is very little love to Jesus Christ; you that love Christ, is not your love very small, not only in comparison with his love to you, but also in comparison with the love which some Christians have attained unto? how strong was the love of the Apostles unto Christ

Chriſt when they left all and followed him! eſpecially after the reſurrection of Chriſt and his Aſcention into Heaven, when the Holy Ghoſt was ſent down and ſat in the likeneſs of fiery tongues upon them: O! what a fire of love unto Chriſt was there then enkindled within them. Hence that bold profeſſion which they make of Chriſt before the chief Prieſts and Elders, *Act.* 4. Hence their rejoycing that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for the name of Chriſt, when they were beaten for their owning and preaching of him. *Act.* 5.41. The love of *Peter* and *John* was great unto Chriſt, and the love of *Paul* was not inferiour unto the love of the chiefeſt Apoſtles; hence it was that he took ſuch pains to preach the Goſpel in ſo many parts of the world even from *Jeruſalem* & round about unto *Illyricum*, *Rom.* 15. 19. See alſo how he approves himſelf to be a Miniſter of Chriſt, and giveth evidences of his ſtrong love to his Maſter, 2 *Cor.* 11.23.24.25.26.27. 28.29. *Are they Miniſters of Chriſt? I ſpeak as a fool, I am more; in labours more abundant, in ſtripes above meaſure, in priſons more frequent, in Deaths oft: of the Jews five times received I forty ſtripes ſave one: Thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I ſtoned,*

thrice I suffered Shipwrack, a Night and a Day I have been in the deep, in journeying often, in perils of Waters, in perils of Robbers, in perils by mine own Countreymen, in perils by the Heathen, in perils in the City, in perils in the Wilderness, in perils in the Sea, in perils among false brethren: in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches; who is weak and I am not weak? who is offended and I burn not? and chap. 12. 10. *I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake.* The ground of all which was the love of Christ which did constrain him, as 1 *Cor.* 5. 14. he had such a love to Christ that he professeth, *Phillip.* 1. 21. *To me to live is Christ, and to dye is gain.* Christ was his life, and his life was wholy at Christs devotion.

But where is such love now to be found? I might speak also of the love of some ancient Fathers, *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, *Ierome* and others: take one instance in *Ierome*, who thus expresseth his love unto Christ, *If my Father were weeping on his*

his Knees before me, my Mother Hanging on my Neck behind me, my Brethren Siſters and Kinsfolk Howling on every ſide, to retain me in a Sinfull courſe; I would ſling my Mother to the Ground, run over my Father, deſpiſe all my Kindred, and tread them under my Feet, that I might run unto Chriſt. How little is your love in compariſon with the love of thoſe Famous Hero's, I mean thoſe eminent Martyrs, who have deſpiſed the Flames, and endured ſuch Racking and Torturing Deaths, for the love which they have born unto Jeſus Chriſt; the fire of their Love burning ſtronger within them, than the fire without them in which their Bodies were conſumed? Is not your love alſo ſmall in compariſon with the love of our late Reformers, which fired them with ſuch courage and reſolution, as to withſtand a whole world of Antichriſtian Fury and Oppoſition? Is your love comparable to that of many Eminent Divines, and private Chriſtians of our own Nation, of the Age immediately going before, who are now aſleep in their Graves; but how few are there come up in their Rooms? It is obſerved, and it is greatly to be Lamented, that there is of late years, a great decay in the Power of Godlineſs, amongſt

those that are Sincere; and is it not evident in the great Decay of Love, even in true Christians unto Jesus Christ? are not you Dwarfs in comparison with others? are not you Babes in Christ, and Weaklings in your love to Christ? Is it not evident, that you have but little love to Christ, when he is but little in your Thoughts and Meditations? the Thoughts are the Handmaids of the Love; where the Love is strong and ardent, there many thoughts will be attending upon it: but will not your Hearts tell you, that your Thoughts of Christ are very few? you can think often of your Food, but how little do your Thoughts feed upon Christ, who is the Bread of Life? You can often think of your Rayment, but how little do you think of the Robes of Christ's Righteousness? You can think often of your Earthly Friends, but how little do you think of Jesus Christ, your Friend in Heaven? Objects of Sense are often not only in your Eyes, but also in your Thoughts; but how little is Christ entertained in your Thoughts, who is the Object of Faith? Moreover, doth it not argue little Love to Christ, that you speak so little of him and for him, in your converse one with another? If you had much

Love

Love to Chriſt, would not this Love breath forth more in your Diſcourſes? You can readily ſpeak of your ſelves, and do often either Directly or Obliquely commend your ſelves, which diſcovers your great Self-love; how little do you commend your Lord and Maſter, and Extoll his excellencies with your lips? and doth not this evidence that you have but little love to him in your hearts? You can readily diſcourſe of News and Publick Occurrences (which is lawfull and needfull, ſo that due limits be obſerved) but when you leave Chriſt quite out of your Diſcourſe, it ſhews that you have not abundance of Love to him, becauſe out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth will ſpeak. Such as have much love to the World, will ſpeak of their Riches; ſuch as have much love to Pleaſures, will be often ſpeaking of that ſubject; ſuch as love their Friends much, will be often ſpeaking and commending of them, when they are in company; and when you ſpeak but little of Chriſt, it is a ſign that you love him but little. Doth not the little Zeal which you have for Chriſts Honour in the World, argue that you have but little Love to him? where is your activity for Chriſt to promote

mote his Interest amongst those Relations and Friends, that you have acquaintance with? do you labour all you can, to bring others into the wayes of God, and into acquaintance with Christ? Besides, will not your little secret Devotion, argue your little Affection unto Christ? will not your closets or other retiring places witness how little you are in secret prayer and converse with Christ there? Brief and Straitned prayer in secret, doth argue a Heart Straitned in love to Jesus Christ. Doth not your Backwardness to the Exercise of this Love to Christ, shew the weakness of your love? how slow of Heart are you to the Love of Christ? how hard to be perswaded? you need not be perswaded to Love your Wives, if they be Kind and Helpful; you need not be perswaded to Love your children, if they be Pretty and Hopefull; you need not be perswaded to Love your Friends, if they be Friendly and Faithful: and yet whatever attractives of Love, the most strong of any, be in Jesus Christ, you are backward to this Love.

Need I say more to convince you, that you have but little Love to Christ? will not your own Conscience from these clear Evidences sufficiently witness the thing?

And

And now Chriſtians think what a Sin, what a Shame, what a Folly it is, that you ſhould have ſo little Love unto Jeſus Chriſt: If it be ſo great a Sin for ſuch as are Strangers unto Chriſt, to have no Love at all to him, that it brings them under the moſt Dreadful curſe; ſurely it cannot be a ſmall Sin, that you (who are his true Diſciples) ſhould have but little Love unto him; is it not very diſpleaſing to the Father, that you ſhould have but little Love to his Son? if he do not hate you becauſe of your Relation unto Chriſt; yet, is he not angry with you, for the Lukewarmneſs of your Affection unto Chriſt? which Sin is Aggravated by the nearneſs of your Relation. Is it not Diſhonourable unto Chriſt, that you ſhould have ſo little Love to him? don't you in Effect ſay, there is no great worth or Amiableneſs in him, when you have no great Love unto him? are you not hereby ingrateful unto Chriſt, beyond what can be perallell'd by any ingratitude unto the moſt obliging Earthly Friend? Is it not your ſhame, that you ſhould have ſo little Love to Chriſt, when he doth ſo much deſerve your Love? Beſides the Infinite Excellencies and Perfections which are in his perſon; doth not his Infinite

finite Kindness unto you, call for (not only the Truth, but also) the Strength of your Love? Think what he hath Done for you; think what he hath Suffered for you; think what he hath Purchased for you; think what he hath Promised to you; think what he hath Laid out for you; think what he hath Laid up for you; and yet to have but little Love to Christ? yet to make such poor Returns! Moreover, is it not your Folly to have but little Love to Christ? Don't you hereby bereave your selves, or debarre your selves of such peace as passeth all understanding; of such sweetness and comfort both in the strength of your love, and in the sense of His Love, as is inconceivable? is not Injury and Mischeif unto your selves, the consequent of your little Love unto Christ? must you not draw on Heavily in the wayes of God, as *Pharoah* when his chariot-wheels were taken off? Love to Christ is like wheels, in your motion for Christ, and like Oil to the wheels, which makes you ready unto any good work which he doth call you unto; but when you have but little Love unto Christ, you must needs be more slow in your motions, more sluggish in Christ's service; you will not, you cannot take that pains in

in the work of the Lord, and be ſo Zealous as you might and ſhould be for your Maſter's Glory.

To Conclude, if you have but little love to Chriſt, you will be apt to faint in the day of Adverſity, to ſhrink when you are called to take up his Croſs and ſuffer for his ſake: leſſer ſufferings will diſcompoſe you, greater ſufferings will affrighten and amaze you, and you will be in danger of turning fearful Apoſtates in time of great Tryals; there is need of great Love to chriſt, as well as great Faith, to carry you thorow ſufferings with courage that you may perſevere unto the end.

SECT. XI.

Uſe 4. FOR Exhortation unto the love of Jeſus Chriſt, whom you have never ſeen, this is the Uſe chiefly deſigned in the choice of this ſubject, and which I ſhall moſt largely inſiſt upon. In the Proſecution of it, I ſhall give ſome Motives, and then ſome Directions.

The Motives to Induce and Excite you unto the Love of this unſeen Chriſt, may be drawn 1. From the conſideration of what Chriſt is. 2. From the conſideration

tion of Christ's Love. 3. From the consideration of Christ's Benefits. 4. From the consideration of that Love which Christians have, and should have unto Christ.

The first sort of Motives may be drawn from the consideration of what Christ is, and that 1 What he is in Himself. 2 What he is to the Father. 3 What he is unto true Christians.

First, *Consider What Christ is in Himself.*

In generall, He is the most amiable person and the most sutable Object for your Love. If you ask of the dayes which are past, which were before you, since the day that God created Man upon the Earth; if you seek from one side of Heaven unto the other; if you make enquiry into all the parts of the Earth, you will never find that either there ever was or is to be found any person so lovely, so beautifull and so every way deserving your Love, as the Lord Jesus Christ: there is a Matchless, Transcendent, and Incomparable Beauty and Excellency in him. How passionately are some Foolish Men in Love with the externall beauty which they see in some Women: the exact Symetry

metry of parts, and comely Proportion of the body; the Amiable Features and Lovely Mixtures of colours in the Face, the Beauty of the Eyes, in their Spirit their Quick and Graceful motions, and Amorous Glances; How doth this Raviſh the Hearts of ſome fond Lovers! although the moſt Beautiful body in the World, is no better than painted clay, dirt and corruption, encloſed in a Fair Skin, which ſickneſs will cauſe to look Pale and Wan, Death will quite Marr and Spoil. But the Amiableneſs and Beauty of Chriſt is more Tranſcendent and Permanent, and therefore a more fit Object for your Love. Chriſt is Fairer than the Children of Men; he is all Fair without any Spot, altogether Lovely without any Blemiſh or Deformity. I have already ſpoken of the Glorious Beauty which is in Chriſt's Glorified Body, the moſt Lovely of any Viſible creature which God hath made; and alſo of the Shining Excellencies which are in Chriſt's Glorified Soul, ſo nearly joyned to the Divinity; could we ſuppoſe all the Lovelineſs that ever was ſeen, or found in the moſt lovely perſons that ever lived, to meet in one perſon; how Lovely would that perſon be! yet ſuch, though never ſo reſplendent,

splendent Beauty, would be but a dark Shaddow, compared with the Brightness of Christ's most Beautifull Person. Can you Love the imperfect Beauty which you see in Creatures, and will you not Love the perfect Beauty which there is in Christ? can you Love a Fading Beauty which soon Withereth like the Flower, and will you not Love Christ, whose Beauty never Decays, but alwayes doth abide more Fresh than Beauty in the Flower of Youth? can you be soon Affected with Beautiful Objects which are before the Eye of your Sense, and will you not be Affected with this far more Beautiful Object, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is so clearly discernable by the Eye of Faith? If the Eye of your Faith were open and clear, to look upon the Transcendent Amiableness which is in Christ, you could not chuse but Love him: could you see the Glances of his Eye, and the Sweet Smiles of his Lovely Face, as some have seen, your Hearts would be Overcome and Ravished with Love, and filled with Extacies of Joy and Ineffable Delight.

More Particularly, There are the most Amiable Qualifications in Christs Person, to attract and draw forth your Love; I shall instance in these six. 1. *His Greatness*

neſs and Authority. 2. *His Holineſs and Purity.* 3. *His Wiſdom and Omniſciency.* 4. *His Truth and Fidelity.* 5. *His Fulneſs and All-ſufficiency.* 6. *His Kindneſs and Mercy.*

1. *Conſider Chriſt's Greatneſs and Authority,* Aquila non capit muſcas, *The Eagle doth not purſue after Flies* : Great Souls are not Affected, except it be with Great Things; there is none ſo Great as Jeſus Chriſt; He is moſt Great in Honour and Dignity, He is moſt Great in Power and Authority. Excellency of Majeſty, doth greatly engage the Love, and command the Hearts as well as the Obedience of Subjects: and thoſe Princes that have the greateſt Power and Authority, are the Darlings of the people, when they dont abuſe their place by Unrighteouſneſs and Cruelty, by Uſurpation and Tyranny. If Power be managed with Clemency, and Authority with Kindneſs towards thoſe that are under command; ſo highly do Princes advance themſelves hereby in the Eſteem and Love of their people, that they will be ready to ſpend their Eſtates, and venture their Lives in their Service. Chriſt is the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, he is clothed with the Higheſt Honour, Arrayed with the moſt Excel-

Excellent Majesty, Decked with the largest Power, and invested with the Greatest Authority. He is the King and Lord of Glory, He is Exalted to Higher Dignity than the greatest Potentate that ever lived upon the Earth; yea he is advanced above all Thrones and Dominions, and Principalities and Powers, of the Glorious Angels which are in Heaven; *All Power is given to him in Heaven and Earth*, Mat. 28. 18. He doth what he will in Heaven the Angels are at his Beck, and Execute his Will, go and come at his Command; and he hath Power on Earth; He is the Head of the Church, and Head over all unto the Church; he can Restrain his Enemies, and conquer them, and bring them under his Feet at his Pleasure; And whatever severity he doth shew sometimes in Executing his Judgments, and taking Vengeance on the Wicked, he doth never abuse his Power by Unrighteousness: He is most Just towards the worst, and punisheth them here lesse than their iniquities do deserve. But what kindness and clemency doth he shew to his own subjects and people? and will not you have a great love to so great a Person? should not the consideration of the high dignity of your Lord, raise your love

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of him unto a great heighth? when Chriſt hath ſuch Authority, ſhall he not command your hearts? when Chriſt is inveſted with ſuch power that he can defend you againſt the rage and cruelty of your moſt powerful and malicious adverſaries, will you not love greatly ſuch a Perſon, as well as truſt confidently under the ſhadow of his Government?

2. Conſider Chriſts Holineſs and Purity, ſome great Perſons who abound in Wealth and Honour, who have ſome kind of amiable natural qualities, and acquired accomplishments which might render them very uſeful in their Countries, yet through their wickedneſs and debauchery, their filthineſs and impurity, their impious and vicious lives, they ſtain all their other excellencies, and render themſelves the objects of contempt and ſcorn, unto thoſe who otherwiſe would bear great reſpect and love to them.

But Chriſt is moſt amiable for his Holineſs and Purity; he was holy in his birth; although born of a ſinful woman, yet he was born without ſin; when he lived amongſt impure ſinners he kept his garments from all ſtains and ſpots, his heart and life were free from all pollutions, and never was he guilty of the leaſt tranſgreſ-

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sion either in action or the least inclination. O what an excellent Person was Christ when here upon the Earth! how glorious in holiness, what bright beams of perfect purity and exact innocency did Christ scatter in those dark places of the Earth where he lived, and amongst those dark sullied sinners with whom he did converse! how then doth Christ shine in holiness, now he is entred into the Holy of Holies, which is above; and there doth converse with none but such as are Holy? I know because of Christs Holiness and Purity, he is the object of the hatred and enmity of the wicked and ungodly; because Christ is an enemy unto their darling and beloved lusts, they have an enmity against Christs Person: when he was here below he telleth his brethren, John 7.7. *The World hateth me, because I testifie of it, that the works thereof are evil,* and the hatred of the world doth still abide upon the same account; Christ doth reprove the world of sin, and this the world cannot endure and away with; the beams of Christs Holiness doe offend their Sore Eyes, his holy precepts do offend their carnal hearts; yet notwithstanding this, he is a most sutable object for the love of Saints upon the account of his Holiness: such as

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are truely judicious will love them moſt who are beſt, and ſuch are really the beſt Men and Women in the world, as are moſt holy; if you are Chriſt's diſciples indeed, you love holineſs where ever you ſee it, and can you love the imperfect holineſs which is in Gods people, and will you not love Chriſt who is perfectly, Infinitely holy himſelf, and the ſpring of all that holineſs, which is to be found in any of the Children of Men? if there be ſuch a wonderful luſtre in the derived holineſs of ſome, that it makes them to ſhine as lights in a dark World, what a wonderful tranſcendent luſtre is there in the original holineſs which is in Chriſt! which as it is matter of great admiration, ſo it calls for great affection, *Pſal.* 119. 140. *Thy word is very pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it.* Chriſt is the Word, not the written Word, but the Eſſential Word, and he is very pure, therefore you ſhould love him.

3. Conſider Chriſt's Wiſdome and Omniſciency. Wiſdom doth make the face to ſhine; Learning doth advance ſome very highly in eſteem; ſuch as know moſt, if their morals be ſutable to their intellectuals, are moſt admired by thoſe that underſtand what true worth is; eſpecially

cially if there be spiritual Wisdome in conjunction with natural and acquired, if there be much Grace in the heart as well as much Knowledge in the head, how worthy are such to be beloved? *Daniel* was a man of great learning and wisdome, skill'd in all the learning of the *Chaldeans* which was not sinful and diabolical; and besides this he was endued with divine wisdome by the teachings of the Holy Spirit; the Angel told this *Daniel* more than once or twice, that he was *a Man greatly beloved*; he was greatly beloved by the Lord of Heaven, greatly beloved by his Prince on Earth, and greatly beloved by his people, and by all, except some few that envied his prosperity and favor *Daniels* Wisdom did render him so universally amiable; How then should Christ be beloved because of his Wisdom and Knowledge! the wisdom of Christ is far beyond the Wisdome of *Daniel*, or the Wisdom of *Solomon* who was wiser than *Daniel*; these men had Wisdome which made them famous and esteemed in their day, but Christ is Wisdome, the Wisdome of the Father; they were children of wisdome, but Christ is the Father and Fountain of wisdome; they had some jewels of wisdome, but the treasures of wis-

wiſdome are hid and laid up in Chriſt, *Col.* 2. 3. they had learning and knowledge, but their knowledge was Ignorance compared with the knowledge of Chriſt, the greateſt part of the things which they knew, being but the leaſt part of the things which they knew not; they knew ſome things, but Chriſt is omniſcient and knoweth all things; they knew many ſecrets of nature, but Chriſt knoweth the ſecrets of Heaven, the mind of God, and nothing is hid from him. How greatly beloved then ſhould Chriſt be! if you are wiſe you will, if you would be wiſe you muſt love Chriſt who is ſo Infinitely wiſe himſelf, and who alone can make you truly wiſe.

4. Conſider Chriſts Truth and Fidelity, Truth and Faithfulneſs are very rare in our dayes, when Falſhood and Deceit do ſo much abound; what was ſaid of old, *Iſa.* 59. 14. 15. Truth faileth and falleth in the Street, the ſame may be ſaid now; and therefore ſuch as are True without Guile, Faithful without Deceit, are worthy of great eſteem and Love. But what Love ſhould you give unto Chriſt, who is not only True, but Truth it ſelf; who is moſt Faithful in all his undertakings and promiſes, and never deceived any that put their truſt in him, who is often better than

his word, never worſe? you will love a true and faithful Friend, and will you not love a true and faithful Chriſt, the beſt Friend of the children of Men? as Chriſts faithfulneſs ſhould encourage your confidence in him, ſo it ſhould endear your love unto him.

5. Conſider Chriſts fulneſs and All-ſufficiency. Such as have large and plentiful Eſtates, are greatly beloved by the poor and indigent, if they find them alſo to have large Hearts and open Hands ready to diſtribute unto their wants and neceſſities; none have ſuch fulneſs and plenty as the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and none ſo willing to communicate of his fulneſs unto the wants of ſuch as are poor in Spirit, and ſenſible of their need, *Col.* 1. 19. *It hath pleaſed the Father that in him all fulneſs ſhould dwell.* There is not only Plenty in him, but fulneſs: not the fulneſs of the ciſtern, but the fulneſs of the Fountain; not the fulneſs only of ſufficiency for himſelf, but the fulneſs of redundancy for his people; not ſome fulneſs for ſome things, but all fulneſs for all things that are good; not fulneſs for ſome time and to continue but for a while, but all fulneſs doth dwell in him, and abide for all his people throughout all Generations; and this not to depend

pend upon the pleaſure of men whoſe minds may alter, but it hath pleaſed the Father, it dependeth upon the pleaſure of the Father who is always the ſame, and whoſe good will to his people is unchangeable. There is a twofold fulneſs in Chriſt for his people here; beſides his fulneſs of Glory which hath a reference to Eternity. There is a fulneſs of Merit, and a fulneſs of Spirit, 1. A fulneſs of Merit, in that full and perfect Righteouſneſs which he hath wrought out for them, and which he doth impute unto them for their Juſtification. 2. There is a fulneſs of Spirit in Chriſt, the Spirit being given unto him without meaſure, which he doth impart and communicate unto them, for their Sanctification and Conſolation. Chriſtians you are empty, Chriſt is full; you are poor, Chriſt is rich; you are indigent, Chriſt is All-ſufficient; and will not you love Chriſt, who is able to do for you, beyond what you are able to ask or think, and is as willing as he is able to ſupply all your Spiritual neceſſities? will you not love Chriſt who is an Overflowing & Everflowing Fountain of Good, who hath inexhauſtible treaſures of Graces and Comforts in him, which are ſet open before you, and unto you, and every day you may freely come and fetch ſuch jewels

out of this Treaſury, as are of higher worth and greater uſe than any Earthly Riches in the greateſt Plenty and abundance?

6. Conſider Chriſts kindneſs and mercy. All the kindneſs of Men is unkindneſs compared with the kindneſs of Chriſt, all the Mercies of Men are Cruelty, compared with the Mercies of Chriſt. He is all kindneſs, all bowels, all compaſſion, all pity, all grace, all mercy to miſerable loſt mankind; I ſhall not enlarge here becauſe this will fall under the ſecond head of Arguments, taken from the conſideration of Chriſts Love. And if you add the kindneſs and mercy of Chriſt to all his other excellencies and perfections, ſurely he will appear to have incomparably the greateſt attractives in him for Love, unto any that have not a very thick veil of unbelief before their Eyes to hide him from their view.

Secondly, Conſider what Chriſt is to the Father. 1. He is moſt nearly related to him. 2. He is moſt dearly beloved by him.

1. Chriſt is moſt nearly Related, and with all moſt perfectly like unto the Father. All the Creatures are related to God

as their Maker, but Gods Children are more nearly related; the Saints are nearly related to God, who are his Children by Adoption and Regeneration; the Angels are more nearly related to God who are his Sons by Creation, and never were ſeparated from him by ſin; but the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is moſt nearly related unto God who is his Son by Eternal Generation: thus Chriſt is the only Begotten Son of God, and doth bear his Image moſt perfectly, being the brightneſs of his Fathers Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon. This near Relation of Chriſt, and his likeneſs to the Father doth call for your ſtrongeſt love; if you have reaſon to honour the Father, on the ſame account you have reaſon to honour the Son; if you have reaſon to love the Father, you have the ſame reaſon to love the Son. You will love the Sons of Princes, and will you not love the Son of God? you will love your own Children who bear your Own Image, and will not you love Chriſt who is the expreſs Image of God? we read of Chriſt, *Phil.*2.6. *Who being in the form of God, thought it no Robbery to be equal with God.* Chriſt (without Robbery or Derogation unto God) is equal with God in all Glorious Excellencies and Perfecti-

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ons, and therefore your higheſt and ſtrongeſt love is his due, and without robbery you cannot withhold it from him.

2. Chriſt is moſt dearly beloved by the Father, 2 *Pet.* 1. 17. *For he received from God the Father, Honour and Glory, when there came ſuch a voice to him, from the Excellent Glory: This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleaſed,* he then that is worthy of the Fathers love, ſurely is worthy of yours; he that is cheifly beloved by the Father ſhould chiefly be beloved by you.

Thirdly, Conſider what Chriſt is unto all true Chriſtians; if you be ſuch, Chriſt is your Shepherd, he feedeth you in green Paſtures, he hath laid down his life for his Sheep, and will you not love ſuch a Shepherd? he is your Captain who hath conquered all your Enemies for you, and leadeth you on to take the ſpoils, and will you not love ſuch a leader? He is your Prophet, who teacheth you the moſt excellent things that ever were taught, the higheſt myſteries, the moſt Glorious Truths, which are of the greateſt concernment to know and believe; and he teacheth you in the moſt excellent way by his word and Spirit, opening your underſtandings

ings as well as his Truths, giving you light andan eye to diſcern this light; and will you not love ſuch a teacher? He is your High-Prieſt who hath made ſatisfaction for you, and withall maketh interceſſion for you, to reconcile you unto God and his interceſſion is inceſſant and prevalent, and will you not love ſuch an Advocate? He is your King who ruleth you moſt powerfully and righteouſly, moſt Wiſely and Graciouſly, and will you not love ſuch a Soveraign. He is your Benefactor the moſt kind and bountiful, and no gifts are comparable unto his gifts, and will you not love ſuch a friend? He is your Brother, and if he be not a ſhamed to own you for his Bretheren and Siſters, will it not be a ſhame if you ſhould withhold from him your hearts? He is your Husband, and you are joyned to him by the Spirit and Faith in ſuch Bonds as cannot be broken, and will not you embrace him in the arms of your deareſt love? He is your Redeemer who reſcued and delivered you from Sin and Sathan, from Death and Wrath: He hath redeemed you by price, the price of his blood, and hath he not then given the greateſt price for your Love? he hath redeemed you alſo by conqueſt, and ſhall he not make a conqueſt of your

hearts? Surely you are altogether unworthy of theſe relations if you do not preſent Chriſt with your moſt endeared and choiſeſt Affections. Thus far the Motives drawn from the Conſideration of what Chriſt is.

SECT. XII.

THe 2d. ſort of Motives to excite your Love to Chriſt, may be drawn from the conſideration of Chriſts love unto true Chriſtians. If you are Chriſtians indeed, Chriſt loveth you, 1. with the Freeeſt Love. 2. With the Trueſt Love. 3. With the Strongeſt Love. 4. With the ſureſt Love.

1. Conſider that Chriſt Loveth you with the Freeſt Love: There are many motives and attractives for your Love to Chriſt; but Chriſts love to you is moſt free; nothing in your ſelves to draw and engage his love, except deformity and enmity to him, except filthineſs which he loatheth, and wickedneſs which his ſoul hateth be motives. There is no man in the world that loveth you but he findeth or fancyeth ſome lovelineſs in you, ſomething to

to be a motive to draw his love to you; witt is a motive to ſome, wealth to others, beauty to ſome, ſtrength to others, near Relation to ſome, dear love to others, liberality to ſome, ſervice to others; greatneſs to ſome, goodneſs to others; likeneſs whether it be in good or evil is a motive to the love of the moſt; But Chriſts firſt love to you, is altogether free, that which is a motive to men and induceth their love to you is no motive to incline the Love of Chriſt: the ſin which you brought into the world with you, and the many ſins which ſince you came into the world have been committed by you, are enough to ſhut out all motives of Love in Chriſt, unto whom all ſin is ſo odious and abominable. Whatever motive induced Chriſt to love you, it was not drawn from your ſelves, but it was drawn from his own bowels. And will not this free love of Chriſt incline you to love him? Doth he love you moſt freely, and will not you love him moſt dearly? Did Chriſt love you without any motive to draw his love? and will not you love Chriſt in whom there are ſo many motives to draw your love? Did Chriſt begin to love, and will not you make a return? Did Chriſt love you under your deformity, and will not you love him in whom there is ſuch perfect

beauty? If you now have any spiritual beauty, it is through the comelineſs which Chriſt hath put upon you, but Chriſts firſt love was free, which is Matter of the greateſt admiration, and ſhould be a Motive unto the greateſt Affection.

2. Conſider that Chriſt loveth you with the Trueſt love: There is little true love in the world, you have many that truly hate you, few that truly love you: and there is much diſſimulation in the pretended love and affection of ſome; all that Flatter you do not truly love you; love in ſhew and outward appearance, in good words and fair ſpeeches is common, but love in deed and in truth, that evidenceth it ſelf in real offices of Love, where there is the greateſt need, this is rarely to be found. *Job* complaineth, *Job* 6. 15, 16, 17. *My brethren have dealt deceitfully like a brook, and as the ſtream of brooks they paſs away; which are blackiſh by reaſon of the ice, and wherein the ſnow is hid; what time they wax warm they vaniſh, when it is hot they are conſumed out of their place.* In the proſperity of *Job* he had many friends, and their love and friendſhip did ſeem to have ſome ſtrength and conſiſtency, like the ice upon the brook; but when heat of trou-

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ble and calamity came upon *Iob*, then the love of his friends did melt and vanish away like ice and snow before the warm beams of the Sun: the Love of the most is selfish, for their own ends, and therefore when their love is not like to be beneficial, but rather create trouble and prejudice to themselves, it cometh to nothing. True Christianity doth teach another kind of Love, and those that are powerfully Religious have a true love, which is ready to shew it self most in an Adverse estate. But none do or can love you with such a true love as Jesus *Christ*; there is no flattery or dissimulation in his Love, his love is not in the least counterfeit, it is not in the least selfish and for his own ends; he doth not love you to Receive good from you, but that he might Do good unto you: He loveeth you not onely in Prosperity, but chiefly He doth evidence his love in Affliction and adversity. He is a present help in the time of trouble, and then doth give the most tender demonstrations of his Love; he is touched with the feeling of your infirmities when you are tempted, and sympathizeth with you in your sorrows when you are afflicted; He shewes his Love in visiting you under your troubles, in supporting you, in relieving you, and in delivering you, Oh! what

what Love ſhould you have unto the Lord Jeſus *Chriſt*, who Loveth you with ſuch a True love?

3. Conſider th t *Chriſt* Loveth you with the Strongeſt Love. His love is more ſtrong than Death, more ardent than the Fire, which hath a moſt vehement Flame. The ſtrength of Chriſts Love to you doth ſhew it ſelf in the activity of his Love, in his Doing for you; and this will appear in three things, 1. In what he hath done for you, 2. In what he is doing for you. 3. In what he will do for you.

1. The ſtrength and activity of Chriſts Love to you, doth ſhew it ſelf in what Chriſt hath done for you; I ſhall briefly name ſome particulars. 1. It was the ſtrong Love of Chriſt which brought him down from heaven for you, to aſſume your Nature, what manner of love was this that God ſhould become man! that Spirit ſhould become fleſh, that he who made the world ſhould be born of a mean Virgin, and all for your ſakes! 2. It was the love of Chriſt which made him to fullfil all righteouſneſs for you; He yielded perfect obedience to the Law both Moral and Ceremonial, that you might have the benefit of it.

it. It was the Love of Chriſt which made him ſubmit himſelf to the temptations of the Devil for you, that he, ſuffering being tempted, might be able to ſuccour you when you are tempted. 4. It was the Love of Chriſt which made him endure the contradictions of ſinners for you; he bore many affronts, contumelies, envyings and blaſphemies of wicked men, that he might give you an example how to carry your ſelves under the like circumſtances. 5. It was the Love of Chriſt which made him lay down his Life for you, *Joh.* 15. 13, 14. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend: ye are my friends.* That ſuch a perſon as Chriſt, ſo excellent, ſo innocent, ſhould undergo death, and ſuch a death as that of the Croſs, ſo diſgraceful, ſo painful; that he ſhould ſubmit to ſuch Ignominy, and endure ſuch Agony, ſuch tearings in his fleſh, ſuch preſſures in his ſpirit, and that with ſuch reſolution and willingneſs, with ſuch ſubmiſſion and patience, and that for ſuch as you, although now his friends, yet whilſt in a ſtate of Nature ſtrangers and enemies; here was Love ſtronger than death! Oh the height! Oh the depth of this Love! There are ſuch dimenſions in this love of Chriſt, as

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the longeſt line of your moſt extended thoughts and imaginations can never be able to reach and meaſure. 6. It was the Love of Chriſt which raiſed him again from the dead for you, *Rom.* 4. 25. *Who was delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification.* 7. It was the Love of Chriſt which carryed him up from earth to heaven, where he was before for you, *Joh.* 16.7. *Nevertheleſs I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will ſend him unto you.*

2. The ſtrength and activity of Chriſts Love to you doth ſhew it ſelf in what he is Doing for you. 1. He is interceding for you at the right hand of God; *Rom.*8.34. *Who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.* It is through Love that Chriſt doth plead for you in Heaven, that your perſons may be accepted, your ſins pardoned, your prayers anſwered, and that the Holy Ghoſt may be ſent down to you to teach ſanctifie and comfort you. 2. He is preparing a place for you, *Joh.* 14. 2. *In my fathers houſe there are many*

Manſions

Manſions, if it were not ſo I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you. It is through love that Chriſt as your forerunner is for you entred into the glorious Palace that is above, to take poſſeſſion of it for you, and to prepare places there for your reception.

3. The ſtrength and activity of Chriſt's love to you doth ſhew it ſelf in what he will do for you. 1. He will keep you in his hand that none ſhall pluck you thence, *Joh.* 10.28. *They ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any man pluck them out of my hand.* Becauſe you are received into the arms of his love, therefore you ſhall be kept by the hand of his power, and therefore you ſhall never either finally or totally fall away. 2. Chriſt will make all things work together for your good, *Rom.* 8. 28. *And we know that All things work together for good to them that love God.* Chriſt hath an endeared love to all you that love God, your love being the fruit of his; and when Men and Devils conſpire together to do you miſchief, Chriſts love will turn it unto your ſpiritual advantage. 3. Chriſt will ſtand by you in trouble and at death, *John* 14. 18. *I will not leave you comfortleſs, I will come unto you.* When affliction doth ariſe, eſpecially if it be for his ſake, &

you

you are bereaved of all outward Comforts, Christ will not leave you comfortless, when friends fail, and flesh fails, and Heart fail, yea and life fails, Christ will not fail, but will stand by and strengthen you, and be a light to you in your darkest hours, a stay to your Spirits when they are ready to sink within you. 4. After death Christ will take care of your Souls, he will not suffer them to wander they know not whither, he will not suffer the Devil to seize on them as his prey, but he will send his Angels to conduct and convey them into the heavenly paradise, that where he is there they may be also, *Luk.* 16. 22. *And it came to passe that the Beggar died and was carryed by the Angels into* Abrahams *bosom*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 8. *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord.* 5. Christ will raise up your Bodies at the last day, if your Bodies should be consumed by Fire, or drowned in the Water, or rot in the Earth, whatever becometh of them, the Lord Jesus at his second glorious appearance will find them and raise them, and transform them into the likeness of his most glorious body, *John* 6. 40. *And this is the Fathers will which hath sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and Believeth*

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on him may have Everlaſting Life; and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day, Phillip. 3. 20. 21. *For our Converſation is in Heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; who ſhall change our vile Body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious Body.* 6. Chriſt will ſend forth his Angels to gather you into the ſociety of the Elect that have lived in all Ages and all Parts of the World, and to convey you into his preſence, to meet him in the Air when he cometh to Judge the World, *Math.* 24. 31. *And he ſhall ſend his Angels with a great ſound of a Trumpet, and they ſhall gather together his Elect from the four Winds, from one end of Heaven unto the other,* 1 Theſſ. 4. 16. 17. *For the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a ſhout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt; then we which are alive and remain ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air.* 7. Chriſt will own you, and crown you, and admit you into the Kingdom of Heaven, which he hath prepared for you. Math. 25. 34. *Then ſhall the King ſay unto them on his right hand, Come ye Bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdome prepared for*

you

you from the Foundation of the World. Here is ſtrong and active love indeed! and ſhall not the conſideration of this love of Chriſt raiſe and highten your love unto him? ſhall it not provoke and excite you unto activity of love, unto the lively and moſt vigorous exerciſe thereof? hath Chriſt united himſelf to your nature? and ſhall not your Hearts be united to his Perſon? hath he fulfilled all Righteouſneſs for you? and will not you fulfill his command of Love? hath he endured ſuch temptations contradictions and ſufferings upon your account and given himſelf to dye for you? and will not you give your Hearts unto him? hath he riſen from the dead, and Aſcended into Heaven for you? and will not your Affections ariſe from the Earth and Aſcend into Heaven, where Jeſus Chriſt is? Doth he plead in Heaven with the Father for you? and will not you hearken to his pleadings, by his Word and Spirit with you for your love? is he preparing a glorious Manſion for you in his Fathers houſe? and will not you prepare a place for him and entertain him in the inner room of your chiefeſt Affections? doth and will he keep you in his hand? and will not you embrace him in your boſoms? will he make all things work together for your

your good? and will not your Affections work towards him? will he ſtand by you in trouble and at Death? and will not this put life into your love? will he ſend his Angels to convey your ſouls into his preſence, when ſeparated from our Bodies? and ſhall not your Hearts get to him and lodge with him before? will he raiſe up your Bodies at the laſt day? and will not the hopes of this raiſe up your Affections? ſhall you be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the Air, & will Chriſt there own and crown you? and will not the believing fore-thoughts of this raviſh your Hearts with love to Chriſt, and tranſport you with unſpeakable joy? the ſtrength of Chriſt's love to you methinks ſhould engage your love for him, not only in the the Truth of it, but alſo in the ſtrength of it.

4. Conſider that Chriſt loveth you with the ſureſt love. Some Friends may love you a while with ſome kind of ſtrength and ardency, but ſuch differences may ariſe between you, as ſhall ſoon weaken and cool their love, and of Friends they ſhall prove ſtrangers, yea become Enemies unto you: or if their love doth abide, it is not ſure, becauſe they may not abide; if their Love dye

dye not whilſt they live, They may ſoon dye, and then their love is at an end: but the love of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto you is the moſt Sure love: if he begin to love you he will continue to love you; if he love you once he will love you to the end or rather without end; the love of Chriſt is not ſubject to mutations and changes like unto ours; if you ſlag in your love, he will not fail in his love, and though you offend him, he is not irreconcileable; he may indeed upon unkindneſs on your ſide withdraw the manifeſtations of his love for a while, but he will never wholly remove his love from you, the love of Chriſt admits of no changing, knows no ending. Chriſtians, what motives can you find in any perſon, or any thing in the world which you have ſeen, comparable to thoſe which you have in this Lord Jeſus Chriſt, though you have never ſeen him; He is a Perſon moſt amiable in himſelf, his Greatneſs, his Holineſs, his Wiſdome, his Faithfulneſs, his Fulneſs, his Kindneſs do make him ſhine with an admirable luſtre; his Relation to the Father, and the love which the Father doth bear to him, his Relation unto you, being your Shepherd, your Captain, your Teacher, your Advocate, your Soveraign, your Benefactor, your Brother, your Hus-

Husband, your Redeemer, all theſe do commend him to your love, but when matchleſſe beauty and lovlineſs do meet in a perſon that doth bear matchleſs love to you, when this moſt amiable Lord Jeſus doth love you with ſuch a free love, ſuch a cordial love, ſuch a ſtrong and active love, ſuch a ſure and conſtant love; when his love is incomparable, ſurpaſſing all other love, and incomprehenſible ſurpaſſing all knowledge. O with what activity ardour and conſtancy, ſhould you love ſo ſuitable an object!

SECT. XIII.

THe third ſort of motives to excite your love unto Chriſt, may be drawn from the conſideration of Chriſts Benefits. If you are true Chriſtians you have 1. Spiritual Light from Chriſt. 2. Spiritual Life from him. 3. The Pardon of ſin from him. 4. The Robes of Righteouſneſs from him. 5. The Peace of Conſcience from him. 6. The Joyes of the Holy Ghoſt from him. 7. The Riches of Grace from him. 8. The Dignity of Children from him. 9. The Spirit of Prayer from him. 10. Title to the Kingdom of Heaven,

ven, with the first Fruits and fore-tastes of it from him here, and shall be put into the possession of it by him hereafter.

1. You have Spiritual light from Christ; Christ is the Sun from whom all the beams of this light do come; time was when you were not only in the dark, but darkness; but Jesus Christ did enlighten you, *Eph.* 5. 8. *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are yee light in the Lord; walk as Children of the light*: it is Christ that hath turned you from darkness to light, that hath translated you out of darkness into his marvellous light, he hath caused a marvellous light to shine into your minds, whereby he hath discovered to you the wonderful things of the Law, that thereby you might discern the odious nature of Sin; and whereby he hath discovered to you the wonderful mysteries of the Gospel, that thereby you might discern the excellency of Gospel-priviledges, and the exceeding Riches of Gods Grace and Kindness through Jesus Christ. Christ hath opened your Eyes to see the chiefest evil, that you might be delivered from it, and the chiefest good and happiness that you might attain unto it. And doth not this light which you have from Christ call for your love? If the man that was born blind, and was cured

red of his natural darkneſs by Chriſt, did love Chriſt for this favour, ſo as boldly to plead for him before the Phariſees, though he were for it caſt out of the Synagogues, as you may read in *John* 9. How much more reaſon have you to love Chriſt, who hath cured you of your Spiritual darkneſs; which had it continued, you would have gone blindfold to Hell, where there it blackneſs of darkneſs for ever?

2. You have Spiritual life from Chriſt; you were Spiritually dead, and Chriſt hath quickned you, *Eph.* 2. 1. *You hath he quickned who were dead in ſins and treſpaſſes.* We read that Chriſt raiſed *Lazarus* from the dead after he had been buried four dayes, *John* 11. *Lazarus* did love Chriſt before, but no doubt this Reſurrection of him ſo wonderfully did endear his love to Chriſt exceedingly; and ſhall not Chriſts raiſing you up from your Spiritual death, raiſe your Hearts unto a great height of love to Chriſt! you will greatly love one that is inſtrumental to ſave your natural life, when in great hazard and danger, eſpecially if he ſhould do it by venturing his own; and will you not greatly love Chriſt who hath given you Spiritual life, which is far more excellent than the life of Nature; and when he dyed that you might

might live, and when if you had not received this Spiritual life from him, you could not have escaped eternal Death?

3. You have the pardon of sin from Christ; this Christ hath purchased for you, and the purchase hath cost him dear, even his blood which was of more worth than the treasures, were there so many, of ten thousand worlds; this Christ hath sued out for you by his intercession at the right hand of God. Whilst you were under the guilt of sin you were bound over by the Justice of God to suffer the vengeance of Eternal Fire; but being pardoned your obligation to future punishment is taken off, and you are no more lyable to wrath to come, and the vengeance of Hell, than if you had never sinn'd. And will you not love the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath procured for you so great a priviledge? we read of one that had much forgiven her, and she loved much, *Luk.*7.47. and have not you had much forgiven? have not your sins been very numerous, and very heinous? and hath Christ obtained the pardon of them all? and will not you love Christ much?

4. You have the Robes of Righteousness from Christ: you are born naked of Original Righteousness, and you could not

not work out any actual Righteouſneſs for your ſelves that might cover your nakedneſs, whatever you wrought your ſelves it was rags that could not cover you, and it was filthy rags which did pollute and defile you. Chriſt hath given you the Robes of his perfect Righteouſneſs to cover and adorn you withall, and therein you are accepted as perfectly Righteous in the ſight of God. O how ſhould we love the Lord Jeſus for this Garment; if your Bodies were naked and one ſhould give you clothes to cover you, eſpecially if they were rich clothes, you would love ſuch a perſon; and will you not love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt who hath given you a garment to cover your Souls, and that a very rich one, even the Robes of his moſt pure and unſpotted Righteouſneſs which by Faith is put upon you?

5. You have peace of Conſcience from Chriſt. This is that peace which the Scripture telleth us *paſſeth all underſtanding*, *Phil.*4.7. It paſſeth all underſtanding to know the worth of it; ſuch as have this peace would not leave it upon any account, they would part with Eſtate or Liberty, or Life rather than part with their peace; and thoſe which have it no', but

now do slight and neglect it, yet if they be awakened by the sides of the Grave, and when they are come to the confines of Eternity, then they would value this peace, and would give all the world (were it at their dispose) for it. This Jewel of peace you have from Jesus Christ, he hath purchased it for you, the chastisement of your peace was upon him, and he hath promised and bequeathed it in his last will and Testament unto you, *John* 14. 27. *My Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you.* In his reconciling you unto God he hath laid a Foundation for this peace in all you that are true believers; and if he have moreover spoken peace to you in giving you well-grounded evidences of your Reconciliation; if after raising a Storm, he hath sent a calm into your Spirits, and given a sweet serenity unto you in the testimony of his Spirit to and with your Spirits that your peace is made with God, O how should this draw forth your love to Christ?

6. You have the Joyes of the Holy Ghost from Christ. We read of the *Thessalonians*, that they *received the Word in much Affliction, with Joy of the Holy Ghost*, 1 *Thess.* 1. 6. Such are those Joys spoken of in the Text, which are *unspeak-*

able

able and full of Glory. Theſe are not Carnal joys but Spiritual, which are of a higher nature and ſweeter reliſh, that have a higher object, and are the beginnings of Eternal Joys; if you have theſe joys in any meaſure, you have them from Chriſt; he ſends the Holy Ghoſt from heaven to be your Comforter, to fill your Hearts with Spiritual joys, and ſhall not your hearts then be filled with love to the Lord Jeſus who is the Author of them?

7. You have the riches of Grace from Chriſt: if any of you were poor and ready to ſtarve with hunger and cold, and a rich man ſhould give or ſend to you a cheſt full of Gold and Silver, or a Cabinet full of Jewels worth many thouſand pounds; would you not love ſuch a Benefactor? the Lord Jeſus hath given you the riches of Grace, the leaſt meaſure of which is really of more worth than the vaſteſt treaſures of Gold Silver and precious Stones, that ever was gathered together and heaped up by the moſt wealthy man that ever lived upon the face of the Earth; and will you not love Jeſus Chriſt who hath given you theſe ineſtimable riches?

8. You have the Dignity of Children from Chriſt; 1 *John* 3. 1. *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath beſtowed*

upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God! this priviledge of Adoption is bestowed upon you, not only by the Father, but also by the Son; *John* 1. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* We read of some raised from the dust, and lifted up from the dunghill to sit with Princes, *Psal.* 113. 7, 8. It is a far higher advancement to be lifted up from the dunghill of sin, and of slaves to lusts, and Children of the Devil, to be made the Sons and Daughters of the Lord Almighty. This honour have all the Saints, and it is Jesus Christ who hath conferred this honour upon you; and will not this endear your love to Christ?

8. You have the Spirit of Prayer from Christ; being Sons, the Spirit of the Son is sent down into your Hearts whereby you are enabled to say *Abba Father*, *Gal.* 4. 6. through Christ you have access unto God by the Spirit, *Eph.* 2. 18. It is the Spirit of Christ which helpeth your infirmities in Prayer; that formeth your Petitions, that enableth you to Pray with Faith and Life, and Fervour. Through Christ you have free Admittance to the Throne of Grace, through Christ you have Assistance by his Spirit to Pray in Prayer

Prayer; through Chriſt you have Audience, and Gracious Returns; O how are you beholden unto Chriſt? and how ſhould you love him?

10. You have a Title to the Kingdome of Heaven from Chriſt. Through Chriſt you are Children, and through Chriſt you are Heirs. It is Chriſt that gives the firſt Fruits of the Heavenly *Canaan*, the earneſt of the future Treaſure and Inheritance which he hath promiſed, and the foretaſtes ſometimes of thoſe Soul raviſhing Pleaſures, which the Saints ſhall have in Fulneſs, and to Eternity, when they are received up into Glory. And it is Chriſt that hereafter will give Poſſeſſion unto you, of the Kingdome of Heaven. At the Day of His Glorious Appearance, after he hath owned you before the whole World of Angels and Men, and Honoured you to be His Aſſeſſors in His Judging and Condemning the Wicked; he will receive you with Acclamations of Joy and Triumph, into the Glorious Pallace of the New *Jeruſalem*, where you ſhall have the Beatifical Viſion and Fruition of the Glorious *Jehovah*, and be made partakers of ſuch Glorious Felicity as hath not now entred into your Hearts to conceive. And will not the Conſideration of all this ſet

your hearts on fire with love to Christ? Christians, is there any Person like to Christ's Person? is there any love like to Christ's love? are there any benefits like to Christs benefits? No no, he is incomparable in all; methinks then you should by this time feel your love to Christ like Fire to burn within with a vehement flame? or methinks your love to Christ should be like water, I mean the waters of the Sanctuary spoken of *Ezek.* 47. 3. 4, 5. which at entrance were but to the Ankles, a little further were up to the Loyns, a little further a deep River over the head, where a man might swim; methinks you should perceive an encreasing of your love under these various motives, if your love were more shallow at first, methinks by this time it should have got some depth; when such Winds do blow, the waters should flow and overflow, methinks your love to Christ should be raised unto a high tide, and run with a strong Stream. Thus for the motives drawn from the consideration of Christs Benefits, all which are so many Orators for your love.

Sect. 14.

SECT. XIV.

THe fourth and last sort of Motives to excite your love to Christ may be drawn from the consideration of that love which Christians have or should have unto him; and here consider, 1. The Duty. 2. The Priviledge. 3. The Honour. 4. The Wisdom. 5. The Excellency. 6. The Necessity. 7. The Usefulness. 8. The Delightfulness. 9. The Attainableness of this love to Jesus Christ.

1. Consider it is your Duty to love Christ; if it be your Duty to have a Natural affection unto Parents & Children, it is much more your Duty to have spiritual affections unto Christ; If it be your duty to have conjugal affection unto your Earthly Husband and Wife; it is a greater duty to have conjugal love unto this your heavenly Husband. If it be your Duty to love Brethren, Sisters and Kindred, that love you, it is a greater Duty to love Jesus Christ, who loves you above all Relations; if it be your Duty to love your Enemies, it is much more your Duty to love Christ who is your best Friend. It is the will of your Heavenly Father that

you ſhould love Chriſt; the Devil would have you hate him, but God would have you love him, and whether it be moſt reaſon that you ſhould obey the Will of God or the Will of the Devil, judge ye. It is the Will of Chriſt that you ſhould love him; the will of the fleſh is againſt this love, but whoſe will ought you to comply withall? you are not debters to the Fleſh that you ſhould obey it's command, neither are you Debters to any Creatures to give them your choiceſt affections, but you are debtors unto Chriſt to give him your chief love: Chriſt hath moſt right to your love, and will you not give to Chriſt his due? if you are bound to give men their due, are you not much more bound to give unto Chriſt his due? Chriſts due is your beſt, and have you any thing better than your Hearts to preſent him withall? will Chriſt accept of any thing at your hands, ſhould you withhold from him your Hearts? had you Thouſands of Rams, and ten Thouſand Rivers of Oyle to offer to him, had you all the Treaſures of the Earth at your diſpoſe, and ſhould lay it down all at his feet, it would be all ſlighted and diſregarded by him, if you give away yours Hearts from him.

2. Con-

2. Consider it is your Priviledge that you may love Christ, that Christ will give you leave to do it, and kindly accept of your Love. Should Beggars fall in love with Princes in order to the Marriage Union, both their Persons and Love would be rejected with scorn, anger and disdain: There is a far greater distance between you and Jesus Christ, than there is between the highest Prince and the meanest Beggar; and yet the Lord Jesus Christ doth give you leave to love him with a Spiritually conjugal love, in order to the nearest Spiritual Union and Conjunction; and notwithstanding his greatness and your meaness, he is not ashamed to give entertainment unto your Love; although you are so mean as Creatures, & have been so vile as Sinners, yet he doht not scorn and disdain you, but both Persons and Love may find ready acceptance with him. It is your duty to love Christ because he commands you, and it is your Priviledge that you may love Christ because he allows you to do it.

3. Consider it is your Honour to Love Christ. The real Honour of any is not the Noble Blood which runs in their veins the high lineage from whence they are descened, the great Titles with which they

are Invested, or the most eminent Earthly dignities unto which they are advanced: The Heathen could say, *Et Genus et Proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi vix ea nostra voco*; our stock and noble Ancestors, and what we have not done or deserved our selves, we can hardly call our own. And *Virtus sola & unica Nobilitas*: Vertue is the only true Nobility. And the Scripture telleth us, that *the vilest Men are exalted*, *Psal.* 12.8. and *that the most high ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the baseſt of Men*, Dan. 4. 17. Princes and Nobles by their Vices and Wickednesses may render themselves more vile then the Earth under their Feet, more base than the mire in the Streets. The Word of God accounteth only them to be truly Honourable, that are truly Gracious; and this Grace of Love to Jesus Christ doth put a great Honour and lustre upon all those that have it. There is no greater and higher object for your love than the Lord Jesus Christ, a person of so great eminency and excellency: the Love of Christ doth enoble the Heart, and none in the world have such truely great and generous Souls, as those who have the greateſt love to him. According to the

Spirit,

Spirit, ſo is the Man, either, Baſe or honourable; and according to the chief love, ſo is the Spirit; if your Heart do chiefly love any inferiour things, as all ſublunary things are, hereby you are debaſed and diſhonoured; if your Heart chiefly love Chriſt who is a Superior good and ſuperlatively amiable, hereby you are dignified and become truly honourable. We read of Hope (that is the Grace of Hope) that *it maketh not aſhamed*, *Rom.* 5. 5. And the ſame may be ſaid of this Grace of Love to Jeſus Chriſt, it maketh not aſhamed. The moſt in the World do love thoſe things which one time or other will make them aſhamed; the covetous will be aſhamed of their love of Riches, and the voluptuous will be aſhamed of their Love of Pleaſures, and the Ambitious will be aſhamed of their love of Honours; diſappointment of Happineſs and true contentment will make all aſhamed of their inordinate Creature-love, eſpecially when they come to reap the bitter Fruit of their Sin in their Everlaſting puniſhment. *Rom.* 16. 21. *What Fruit had you then in thoſe things whereof you are now aſhamed, for the end of thoſe things is Death.* But the love of Chriſt maketh not aſhamed, it is no matter of diſhonor

and

and therefore neither is nor will be matter of shame for any to love Jesus Christ with the greatest Strength and Ardency : if the wicked do despise and scorn Gods people, upon the account of this love, their scorns are their reall Glory, as on the contrary their esteem of any upon the account of sin, is a reall shame and dishonour.

4. Consider, It is your Wisdom to love Christ. *Deut.* 4. 6. *Keep therefore and Do them, for this is your Wisdom and Understanding in the sight of the Nations, which shall hear these Statutes, and say surely this great Nation is a Wise and Understanding People.* None have such Wisdom and Understanding as those who have and keep this Statute and Commandment to love the Lord Jesus Christ, *Psal.* 111. 10. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom, a good Understanding have all they that do his Commandments* The fear of the Lord and the love of Christ are always in conjunction, or rather the former doth include the latter; this is the beginning and cheif part of Wisdom, and those have the greatest Understandings, who have the strongest Affections to the Lord Jesus Christ. The love of Christ is the most reasonable and therefore the most

wise

wise love. That love is most reasonable, which is chiefly carryed forth towards that object which is most suitable and really most Amiable; none so suitable and amiable an object as the Lord Jesus Christ, as appears in what hath been already said concerning Christs Person, Christs Love, and Christs Benefits. Such as love other persons or things with a cheif love, they are mistaken in the objects of their love, they apprehend more excellency and desirableness in them, than really is in them, and so their love is a foolish love and unreasonable, there being nothing really worthy of it, nothing really amiable in the cheif place beneath and besides Christ. Such as make choice of Christ for the object of their chief love, they make the wisest choice, there are really those excellencies in him which they apprehend, and beyond what they can possibly apprehend and conceive. They are fools that are slow of Heart to love Christ, and they are most wise that are most forward unto this love. It is your Wisdom to love Christ cheifly, and to love Christ ardently, such Wisdom as will make your faces shine in the Eyes of good men, and which will put a lustre upon your Spirits in the Eyes of God? True Wisdom doth not con-

consist in the invention of curious and quaint Notions, in the framing sound and rational Deductions, in uttering the sense of the mind in neat and florid Expressions; but the cheif Wisdom doth lie in the right placing of the Affections, and none have attained so high a pitch of true Spiritual Wisdom, as those that have attained the highest pitch of love to Jesus Christ. It is matter of great wonder, when there is the greatest reason and the strongest arguments for the love of Christ, that Men of the greatest Parts and Learning, who have heard of Christ, do not readily fall in love with him, and attain higher degrees of this love, than others of a more inferior capacity: But the Scripture must be fulfilled, *Math.* 11. 25. *I thank thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes.* Such of you as are but Babes in worldly Wisdom and humane Learning, as have but mean natural parts, and no improvement by education, yet if you love the Lord Jesus Christ above all persons and things in the World, you are far more Wise than the greatest Schollars that are without this love.

5. Con-

5. Consider the excellency of this Love unto Jesus Christ; as the Knowledge of Christ is the most excellent knowledge, *Phillipians* 3. 8. *Yea doubtless I count all things but loss, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*: So the Love of Christ is the most excellent love. It is a love of the most excellent object, the Lord Jesus who is so Excellent; it is a love of the most Excellent original, it cometh down from Heaven, it is wrought by the Spirit of God; it is a love that renders them most excellent that have it. The wicked that are without this love, are like dross; the Righteous that have it are like Gold; the wicked that hate Christ, are like dirt; the Righteous that love him are like Jewels; other loves do darken and defile, the love of Christ doth brighten the Spirit and renders Men truly illustrious, and the excellent of the Earth.

6. Consider the Necessity of this love unto Jesus Christ.

1. The love of Christ is universally necessary: some of you have need to do this thing, and others of you have need to do that; but all of you have the greatest need to love Christ: some of you have need of this Friend, and to love him, that you may

may keep him, and others of you have need of another Friend, one Friend; cannot serve the necessities of all; but all of you have need of Christ for your Friend: he is the only Friend that can serve all your necessities, and you have need to love him above all Friends; it is necessary that you who are poor should love Christ, who have but few or no Friends; and it is necessary that you who are rich should love Christ who have many Friends; Christ being a Friend instead of all to them that have none, and better than all to them that have the most.

2. The love of Christ is absolutely and indispensably necessary: it is not necessary that you should climb up into a high seat of dignity and honour; but it is absolutely necessary that your Affections should climb up and ascend to Jesus Christ who is above; it is not necessary that you should abound in wealth, that you should have full bags, and full coffers, and much riches in your houses, but it is absolutely necessary that you should have the Riches of this Grace of love to Jesus Christ in your Hearts. Food is not so necessary to satisfie your hunger, clothes are not so necessary to cover your nakedness, houses are not so necessary to shelter you

you from the injury of the Weather; the moſt needful thing is not ſo neceſſary to your bodies, as this love to Jeſus Chriſt is neceſſary to your Souls. You may be poor and in the loweſt condition here on Earth, and yet be truly happy whilſt you live, and Eternally happy in the other world, if you have this love, to Jeſus Chriſt; but without this love whatever your Riches, and Honours, and Friends, your Earthly delights and enjoyments be though never ſo deſirable, never ſo plentiful, yet you are miſerable, and ſhall be, miſerable. You may love other Perſons and Things in the world ſubordinately, but you muſt love Jeſus Chriſt cheifly, otherwiſe you are under the curſe both of the Law and Goſpel, and you cannot eſcape the vengeance of Hell.

7. Conſider the Uſefulneſs of this love unto Jeſus Chriſt.

1. The love of Chriſt is uſeful in Proſperity to ballaſt the Heart, that it be not overſet with the full gales of a flouriſhing condition: it is of uſe to moderate the Affections to lawful things; and it is of uſe to keep the Heart from unlawful and ſinful loves; if Chriſt have not your Hearts, ſome baſe and fooliſh luſts will have them, which

which will wound your Consciences with guilt, and peirce your Hearts thorow with many sorrows.

2. The love of Christ is useful in Adversity, to bear up the Heart from sinking and being overwhelmed with the Winds and Waves of Trouble and Affliction; it is of use to establish the Heart from being extraordinarily moved in the most Stormy times: not only Faith but Love too is of a fixing nature to keep from amazing fears of evil tidings, and the greatest perils; and of a strengthning Nature to stay and support the Spirit and keep off pressing Griefs and despondencies in the darkest and most doleful days.

3. The love of Christ is useful to quicken and excite unto duty, this makes the yoke of Christ easie, and will enable you to draw cheerfully therein; this makes the burden of duty (so accounted by the most,) to be no burden in esteem; if you have much love unto Christ you will account duty to be your priviledge, and the Service of Christ to be freedome, and none of his commands will be grievous, but all of them joyous unto you; if you have much love unto Christ, your Hearts will be enflamed hereby with zeal for your Masters Glory, and you will never

ver think you can do too much for him.

4. The love of Chriſt is uſeful to arm you againſt Temptations. If Faith be a Shield, Love to Chriſt is a Breaſt-plate againſt the ſharpeſt Darts which the Devil can throw at you; love to Chriſt doth Garriſon your Hearts againſt this Enemy, and is a ſtrong defence againſt any overtures which the Devil may make in his Temptations to draw you to ſin: how can I do this evil and offend my dear Lord, will be the anſwer of love to repel temptations to ſin, whatever alluring proffers they be accompanied withal. Temptations will have no force to prevail over you, if this love of Chriſt be ſtrong within you.

5. The love of Chriſt is uſeful to fit you for the croſs and the greateſt ſufferings which you may be called unto for the ſake of Chriſt. If you have great love to Chriſt, you will be ready to ſuffer for Chriſt with patience and with cheaf uluefs; the heavieſt croſs will ſeem light, diſgrace and ſhame will be accounted honour, loſſes will be eſteemed gains, pains, pleaſures, or at leaſt priviledges: priſons will ſeem Pallaces, and death will be accounted life. O how have ſome run to the ſtake

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and embraced the Flames of Fire kindled to burn them, when they have felt the fire of love to Christ burning strongly within them! thus this love is usefull in Life.

6. The love of Christ is useful at death. This love in its strength will put a beauty upon the Aspect of death, which seems so grim and terrible unto the most. If you have much love to Christ, you will look upon death as Christs messenger sent for you to bring you out of the dark Prison of of the World and the Body, and to convey you into the Mansions of Glory, where your dear Lord is, and you will not be unwilling to leave the World that you may live with Christ.

8. Consider the sweetness of this love unto Christ. If there be sweetness in the love of the Members, there is much more sweetness in the love of the head; if there be delight and comfort in the love of Christs disciples for their Masters sake, there is much more delight and comfort in the love of Christ himself the Master for his own sake; the Apostle telleth us of comfort in love, *Phillip.* 2. 1. that is in the love one of another, but the consolations in the love of Christ are far exceeding; there are no such sweet motions of Heart

Heart, as thoſe of the ſtrong and fervent outgoings of it in its love to Chriſt, eſpecially when Chriſt doth draw near and maniſeſt his love unto the Soul. Chriſt, doth rejoice in his love unto his Diſciples, and they may rejoice in their love to him, and this joy in the love of Chriſt is a full joy: *John* 15. 11. *Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full*: in the former verſe Chriſt ſpeaketh of his love to them, and here of his joy in them they were the objects of his joy as they were the objects of his love, and according to the meaſure and ſtrength of their love to Chriſt, ſo is the fulneſs of their joy in Chriſt. *Cant.* 4. 9. *Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my Siſter my Spouſe, thou haſt raviſhed my Heart with one of thine Eyes, with one chain of thy neck*: they are the words of Chriſt the Beloved, unto his Spouſe the Church, expreſſing the raviſhing delight which he found in her Looks of Faith, or glances of Love, and the chain of Graces which ſhe was adorned withall. How then may your Hearts be raviſhed with unſpeakable delight in looking upon Chriſts moſt amiable face, and in the fervent actings of your love unto him? when a glance of his Eye, a ſmile, a beam from his counte-

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nance doth enkindle a fire in the breast, and this fire of love to Christ doth burn and flame; O how sweet is this flame, beyond what tongue is able to express.

9. And lastly, Consider the Attainableness of this love to Christ. Bruits are not capable of this love to Christ, but you are capable: as your minds are capable of knowing him, so your hearts are capable of loving him. Others have attained this love who were as much without it, and as much averse unto it, as any of you may be. Here you are capable, hereafter if you live and dye without it, you will be utterly uncapable. You have now the means of Grace, and as of other Graces, so of this Grace of love to Christ, in the diligent use of the means you may attain there unto. Thus I have done with the Motives to excite you unto the love of Christ.

SECT. XV.

THe second thing propounded in the Prosecution of the use of Exhortation. was to give Directions, and the directions will be of two sorts. 1. How to

to attain this love to Chriſt. 2. Wherein to ſhow this love to Chriſt. Firſt, How to attain this love to Chriſt, and here I ſhall, 1. Direct you how you may attain this love to Chriſt in the truth of it, where you are wholly without it. 2. Direct you how to attain much of this love to Chriſt, where you have it but in a low degree and weak meaſure. The firſt directions then ſhall be, how you that are Graceleſs, and Chriſtleſs, and wholly without this love to Chriſt, may attain this love to Chriſt.

1. If you would attain this love unto Jeſus Chriſt whom you have never ſeen, you muſt get a thorow perſwaſion that there is ſuch a Perſon as Jeſus Chriſt, and that he is ſuch a Perſon indeed, as the Scriptures have revealed him to be. The reaſon why Heathens and Infidels are without love to Chriſt is becauſe they have never heard of him, and the reaſon why many nominal Chriſtians that have heard of Chriſt are without love to him, is becauſe they are not really perſwaded that there is or ever was ſuch a perſon as Jeſus Chriſt in the World. If you would attain this love you muſt give firm aſſent to this Truth (which is the greateſt of all, and the very pillar & foundation of

the

the whole Christian Religion) that Christ really is, and that the History of him is no cunningly devised Fable. If you have reason to beleive that there was such a a Person as *Alexander* the Great, that there was such person as *Julius Cæsar*, both which lived before Christs time; you have more reason to believe that there was and is such a Person as Jesus Christ: you have only Prophane history for the former, but you have Sacred history for the latter; you have only the writings of men to testifie the one, but you have the word of God in the Holy Scripture to testifie the other. You have as much reason to beleive the history of the Gospel as to beleive any other history, and you have more reason to believe the history of the Gospel than to believe any other history. I shall suggest one reason amongst many that might be mentioned. The History of the Gospel was written by unlearned Fishermen, and it was beleived by as learned men as any in the world, in and near the time of their writing, which belief some of them sealed with their blood, which they would never have done had they found any reason to suspect the truth of this history, which (had there been any reason of suspition) they might easily have found

found out in those times when such a grand Fable as this (had it been a Fable) could not possibly have gained credit, amongst wise and inquisitive men; especially when it would have been their greatest worldly Interest, the preservation of their Estates and Lives, to have disbelieved and disowned it. If, beside the Apostles, all the learned Fathers (whose Works are extant amongst us, who lived near the Apostles times, and some of whom suffered Martyrdom for Christ's sake) did see reason to believe that there was such a Person as Christ, surely you have reason to believe, and no solid reason to discredit the report of him in the History of the Gospel. And when you have attained a firm Assent unto this, get a full perswasion that Jesus Christ is such a person as the Scriptures do record and testifie him to be. Be perswaded of his Amiableness, his Greatness, his Holiness, his Wisdom, his Faithfulness, his Fulness, his Kindness, the Relation he stands in to the Father, his onely begotten and dearly beloved Son; the Relation he standeth in to his People, especially in his Offices of *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *King*, as I have set him forth in the Motives to stirre up Love; acquaint your selves with the History of his Birth so

Wonderfull, of his Life so Holy, of his Works so Powerfull, of his Doctrine so Heavenly, of his Sufferings so Great, of his Death so Painfull and yet so Voluntary, of his Resurrection, Ascension, Session and Intercession at the right hand of God, so needfull for us, as you have this History upon record in the New Testament: the assent to this in your Minds, will be a preparative for the attaining of true Love to Jesus Christ in your Hearts.

2. If you would attain true Love unto Jesus Christ, you must get *Conviction of Sin*, and a *sense* of your Need of Christ. The prevailing love and liking of Sin is inconsistent with true love unto Jesus Christ; such as love Christ do hate Sin, and such as love sin have an Enmity against Christ: Whilest your hearts goe after your Covetousness, or your Voluptuousness, or are set upon any other Wickedness, your hearts cannot be set upon Christ; Before you can love Christ, your hearts must be taken off from sin. Get therefore a conviction of Sin as the greatest Evil in the world. Be perswaded what an evil thing and a bitter it is, to transgress Gods Law, and thereby to affront the highest Majesty, the great King of Glory.

Look

Look into the Word and Law of God, and ſee what is there required, what is there forbidden, and then look back upon your Lives, or look into the Regiſter of your Conſciences, that you may find out what your ſins of Omiſſion and Commiſſion have been. Take a view of your tranſgreſſions of the Law, and of your diſobedience alſo unto the Goſpel; and as you are guilty before God, ſo labour for a clear ſight and deep ſenſe of your Guilt, how you are under the Curſe for your Diſobedience, how you are liable to ruine and eternal deſtruction for your ſins. Look upon ſin as the moſt miſchievous thing in the world; if there be any evil in any temporal calamities which ever did befall any of the children of men, yea if there be any evil in future miſeries, in the extremity and eternity of Hells Plagues and Puniſhments, be perſwaded that there is far more evil in ſin which is the cauſe of all. Think how miſerable you are whileſt under the Guilt and Reigning power of ſin, that the Worm is not ſo vile, that the Toad is not ſo full of deadly Poyſon, that the filth of the Earth is not comparable unto the filth of your ſins. Think how baſe and diſingenuous you have been, how monſtrouſly ingrateful to your Maker and Benefactor, what

Traytors and Rebels you have been to your Supream King and Soveraign. Think what peril and danger continually you are in of Death and Hell, how weak the thred of Life is which ties Soul and Body together, which may be suddenly cut when you are least aware, when you are most secure; and then if you be found in a Christless state, your Souls will be conveyed immediately unto a place of remedileſs and eternal misery. Be perſwaded that you are undone irrecoverably, unleſs the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt* do help you, that you are loſt for ever unleſs the Lord Jeſus Chriſt do ſave you, that you cannot eſcape the dreadful Vengeance of God, but muſt be tormented moſt horridly and everlaſtingly, amongſt the Devils and the damned in Hell, unleſs the Lord Jeſus Chriſt do deliver you from the Wrath which is to come. The ſight and ſenſe of ſin, your miſerable condition thereby, and of your indiſpenſable need of Chriſt, will make way for your Love of him. If any of you were in debt many thouſand pounds unto a ſevere Creditor, and had not one penny to diſcharge it, and you were threatned by him to be thrown into Priſon, where you muſt lie and rot and ſtarve and die, without hopes of relief or releaſe, ex-

except you could make payment of the debt: And if you ſhould hear of ſuch a Rich man that were willing and did proffer to be your Surety, and to pay all for you; ſurely you would have an endeared Love to ſuch a friend and Benefactor: Your ſins are Debts beyond the vaſteſt ſumme of Money that ever was ow'd or pay'd, and you are not able to pay one farthing, to give the leaſt ſatisfaction unto God, unto whom you are indebted; and God is ſevere, and ſtrictly juſt, and without full ſatisfaction to his Juſtice, he will throw you into a worſe Priſon than the moſt naſty doleſom Priſon on Earth, I mean into the Priſon of Hell, where you muſt lie without the leaſt relief, or any hopes of releaſe: The Lord Jeſus Chriſt proffers to be your Surety, to pay off all for you, and to give you a full diſcharge; were you ſenſible what a Debt Sin is, and what a Priſon Hell is, ſurely it would work your hearts unto an endeared Love of ſuch a Friend and Surety, who alone can keep you out of this doleſome dreadfull Priſon, into which without him you will certainly and may ſuddenly be thrown. If any of you were ſick of a Death-threatning diſtemper, and you had made uſe of many Phyſicians, but none could do you good;

and if you should hear of one Physician who could assuredly and would readily and freely cure your Disease, and save your Life; surely you would thankfully make use of this Physician, and his kindness would exceedingly engage your Love: Sin is the Souls sickness, you are sick unto death, Sin when it is finished will bring forth Death, not only Temporal but Eternal; It is the Lord Jesus Christ onely that can cure you of this deadly Sickness, that can remove your Sin, and thereby deliver you from this Death of Deaths; Get a sense of the dangerous sickness of Sin, and you will prize and use and love the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the onely Physician of value in this case. If any of you were guilty of Murder, or Theft, or High Treason, or any other heinous breach of the Law of the Land, for which you were apprehended, arraigned, accused, and condemned to be Hanged or Burned, or to a more tormenting Death than either; and if you should hear of a Prince at Court that had begg'd the Pardon of such Crimes, for such Malefactors, and had obtained, and he should send to you to signifie his willingness to do the like for you; surely you would thankfully accept of such a proffer, and would love this Prince as your

your life, who ſhould thus preſerve you from Death: You are all Guilty of high Treaſon and Rebellion againſt the King of Heaven, in your breach of his Law, and you are condemned by this Law, not to be hanged for it, or beheaded, but to be burn'd for it, to be burn'd in the Fire of Hell, which is unquenchable; The Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the Prince of Glory, a Friend in the Court of Heaven, who hath procured a Pardon for many ſuch male-factors, and ſendeth to you to ſignifie his willingneſs to procure your Pardon, if you will make uſe of him; Surely, if you have a ſenſe of your Crime and Danger, you will apply your ſelves unto Chriſt to ſave you, and you will not withhold your Love from ſuch a one as ſhould ſhew you ſuch unparallel'd Favour.

3. If you would attain true Love unto Chriſt, you muſt get an Intereſt in Chriſt, you muſt lay hold on Chriſt by Faith, that you may be united to him, and related to him; It is Faith that works Love, to them that believe Chriſt is precious, but by Unbelievers he is ſleighted, and cannot be beloved; without Union to Chriſt you will have no affection to Chriſt; the foundation of Love is layd in the Relation to

the Beloved, and this Union to and Intereſt in Chriſt, it is only by Faith: If then you would embrace Chriſt in the arms of your Love, you muſt firſt lay hold on Chriſt, and receive him by the hand of Faith. Whatever Motives and Attractives of Love there be in Jeſus Chriſt, they will be none to you without this Intereſt and Relation; Chriſt is a Perſon moſt beautifull, moſt lovely and amiable, but he will not be ſo in your eyes, ſo long as you are without the eye of Faith; he is great and powerfull, but ſo much the worſe for you, becauſe without Intereſt in him, his power is engaged againſt you: he is pure and holy, and whileſt in your ſins you are therefore the more odious in his ſight; he is wiſe and knoweth all things, therefore is privy to all your ſins; he is moſt true, and therefore will fulfill his threatnings againſt ſuch as go on ſtill in their treſpaſſes; he is full, but you without intereſt in his Perſon have no ſhare in his fulneſs; he is kind, but it is to thoſe that are related to him, but what is this to you that are Unbelievers? he is a Shepheard to his Sheep, but you are Goats; he is a Captain to his Souldiers, but you are Enemies; he is a Teacher to his Diſciples, but you are the Devils Scholars; he

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is a Gracious Soveragin, but it is to his Subjects, you are rebells; He is a Prieſt to his People, having made ſatisfaction and doth make interceſſion for them; but you trample his blood under his feet. He is a Friend and Benefactor to his People, but you are Strangers; he is a Brother, and a Husband to his People, but you ſtand in none of theſe Relations; he is a Redeemer to his People but your are Slaves and Captives.

The light which he gives is moſt ſweet, but you are darkneſs; the life which he imparts is moſt excellent, but you are dead in ſins and treſpaſſes; he gives pardon of ſin, but you are under guilt; he gives Peace of Conſcience, but your Conſciences are ſtill wounded and ſeared; he gives the Joyes of the Holy Ghoſt, but you are in danger of Eternal woes; the Robes of his Righteouſneſs are moſt Rich, but you are naked; the Riches of his Grace are ineſtimable, but you are ſtill poor; the dignity of being made the Sons of God is moſt admirable, but you are Children of the Devil; he gives acceſſe unto God in Prayer, but you are ſtill at a diſtance; he gives a Title to the Kingdom of Heaven, but if you continue in your preſent ſtate, you will be ſhut at laſt out of the Pal-

lace which is above, and be thrust down into the Prison of Hell which is below. What then are all these motives to draw forth love to Christ unto you, that have no interest in Christ? it is Union and Relation unto Christ, and interest in him by Faith, which puts life into these motives that they may indeed attract love; O then be perswaded without further delay to endeavor after this interest in Christ; you must have it, or you are lost irrecoverably, you will be miserable Eternally; and you may attain this interest, others have attain'd it, as mean, and as vile as your selves; and you are called unto Christ, O be perswaded then to come unto Christ, and joyn your selves by Faith unto him, that you may have interest in Christ and in all his Benefits. If you ask me what this Faith is that gives an interest in Christ, what it is to believe; I answer out of *John* 1. 12. that it is to receive Christ. *But to as many as received him to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to them that Believe in his Name.* Be perswaded then to receive Christ and accept of him upon the terms of the Gospel. Receive and take hold of Christ by the hand of Faith. And that you may do this, 1. You must let go your hold of sin, if your hugg sin in your bosom,

boſom, if you harbour baſe Luſts in your Hearts, you cannot receive and give entertainment to Chriſt there: you muſt thruſt ſin out, if you would let Chriſt in. 2. You muſt let go your hold on the World; I don't ſay you muſt let it go out of your hands, and throw away the eſtates which God hath given, except it be to part with ſome proportion in a way of Mercy and Charity, and except you be called to leave all rather than to forgo Chriſt or any of his Truths; but you muſt let the World go out of your Hearts, the World muſt not ſit upon the Throne of your Hearts, that ſeat muſt be reſerved for Chriſt, cheif love and inordinate love to the world and things in the world muſt be taken off. 3. You muſt let go hold of ſelf; your own Righteouſneſs and all ſelf-confidences muſt be parted with, you muſt be humbled and emptied of your ſelves, if you would be prepared for the receiving of Jeſus Chriſt, and receiving of that fulneſs which there is in him. And then, 1. Receive Jeſus Chriſt as your High-Prieſt to reconcile you unto God, truſting alone in his Merits and Mediation, 2. Receive Jeſus Chriſt as your Prophet to inſtruct and lead you in all Truth by his Word and Spirit. 3. Receive Jeſus Chriſt as your Soveraign Lord and King to Rule.

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you. 4. Receive Jesus Christ as your Captain to tread down your Spiritual Enemies under your feet. 5. Receive Jesus Christ in all his Relations of Shepherd, Friend, Brother, and especially in the Relation of an Husband, and joyn your selves to him, and make over your selves to him, dedicating and devoting your selves to him, and giving up your selves to be guided, guarded, provided for, and governed by him. This is to receive Christ, and this is to Believe, this gives Union and Relation, and interest in the Lord Jesus, and if you do thus joyn your selves to Christ by Faith; you will quickly feel love to Christ to spring forth, to work and act, and that vigorously; and to bring forth such fruit in the life as shall evidently shew, that love to Christ is rooted in the Heart.

4. If you would attain Truth of love to Jesus Christ, be diligent in the use of all those means which God hath appointed for the working of it, I shall instance only in two means.

1. Be diligent in Hearing the Word Preached; as Faith cometh by Hearing, so love to Christ is wrought by the same means, *Hear and your Souls shall live*,

faith

ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 55. 3. and I may ſay, hear that your Hearts may love, that where the Eye cannot, the Ears may affect the Heart with love to the Lord Jeſus. Whilſt *Lydia* was hearing *Paul* Preach, her Heart was opened, *Act.* 16. 14. and whilſt you are hearing Miniſters Preach of Chriſt, your Hearts may be opened to receive him, and to embrace him in the arms of your deareſt love, See *Act.* 11. 15. *As I began to ſpeak the Holy Ghoſt fell on them, as on us at the beginning*; whilſt *Peter* was Preaching and the Gentiles were hearing, the Holy Ghoſt was ſent down from Heaven and fell upon upon; and ſo whilſt you are hearing the Word, God may give forth of his Spirit to work this Grace of love to Jeſus Chriſt in your Hearts.

2. Be diligent and earneſt in Prayer unto God for this love, confeſs and bewail before him your want of this love, tell him you deſerve a double *Anathema*, becauſe you do not love Chriſt, and withall tell him you cannot of your ſelves love him, that you can as eaſily lift a Mountain to Heaven, as lift up your hearts unto Chriſt; but deſire that he would draw up your love to Chriſt by his Spirit. Beg of him that he would put out the fire of Luſt, and all

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inordinate creature-love, and that he would enkindle a fire of love in you to this most lovely Jesus, which no corruption in your Hearts may be able extinguish. And in your Prayers present your Hearts to the Lord Jesus, offer them up freely to him, and desire that he would accept of them, that he would take hold of them, and take possession of them and erect his Throne in them, and an Everlasting habitation for himself.

Section. XVI.

HAving given directions how you may attain the Truth of love to Christ where you are without it, I come now to give directions how you may attain much of this love to Christ, where you have it but in a low degree and weak measure. Would you attain much love to Christ?

1. Be much in Contemplation of Christ; consider often what motives there are of love in him, presse them upon your Spirits and labour to awaken and rouze up your Hearts unto the vigorous exercise of this love. Spend time in secret retirement, and there think, and think again, of the Superlative Excellencies and Perfections which

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re in Chriſt's Perſon, how wonderfull and matchleſs his love is, what heigths in it that cannot be reached, what depths in it that cannot be fathomed, what other dimenſions which cannot be comprehended: Meditate often of his benefits, how incomparable his love-tokens be: and whilſt you you are muſing, you may feel the fire burning; whilſt you are looking you may feel your Hearts leaping; whilſt you are taking a view of him, ere you are aware, your Hearts like the Chariots of *Aminadab*, may run to him: O the raviſhments of love! the tranſports of Soul! which ſome Believers have found in their retired thoughts and views of Chriſt. Get often into the Mount of Divine Contemplation, and there look upwards unto Heaven, and think with your ſelves. *Yonder, Yonder above the ſhining Sun is the more Glorious Son of Righteouſneſs; there at the right hand of the Throne of God, is my beloved Jeſus the Son of God ſeated, and though he be ſo high above me both in place and dignity, yet he thinketh upon me, and pleadeth for me, and many a gift hath he thence & ſent by his Spirit conveyed unto me, and I can ask nothing of the Father in his name, but, if it be really for my good, I have it by his means. O dear Jeſus, how lovely art thou in thy ſelf,*

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the darling of heaven! the Delight of the Father! the Admiration of Angels! O what brightneſs of Glory, what ſhining luſtre art thou arrayed with! thou art clothed with moſt excellent Majeſty and Honour! thou art girded with infinite Might and Power! the beauty of thy face is moſt wonderfull! the ſmiles of thy countenance are moſt ſweet and delightful! and doth this lovely fair One, this faireſt of ten thouſand, this moſt excellent and alltogether lovely Perſon bear a particular love to me? to ſuch a vile worm as me? to ſuch a dead Dog as me? to ſuch an undeſerving, ill-deſerving, hell-deſerving ſinner as me? O what marvellous kindneſs is this! what infinite Riches of Free Grace! doth he know me by name? hath he given himſelf for me? and given himſelf to me? and ſhall not I give him my heart? am I written in his book, Redeemed with his blood, clothed with his Righteouſneſs, beautified with his Image? hath he put the dignity of a Child of God upon me, and prepared a place in the Fathers houſe for me? O wonderful! O admirable! what ſhall I render? what returns ſhall I make? had I a thouſand tongues, ſhould I not employ them all in ſpeaking his praiſe? had I a thouſand Hearts ſhould I not preſent them all as too mean to

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thank-offering unto him. And yet am I slow, slow of Heart to love this dear and sweet Jesus? awake O my Soul! awake from thy dulness and stupidity? shake off thy sleep which glues thine eye-lids so close together, shake out the dust of the Earth which hath got into thine eyes and keeps thee from the view of thy beloved. Arise O my Soul! and lift up thy self, unfetter thy feet, unclog thy self, take the wing and mount up above the sky and visible Heavens, even to the place where the lovely and dear Jesus is. Take thy leave of the world, and all things therein. Bid farewel to the flattering honours, the deceitful Riches, the glozing Pleasures, that are here below: bid adieu to them, and leave them to those that place their chiefest happiness in them: if Earth hath thy body for a while, yet let it have thy heart and chiefest affections no more; come O my Soul ascend and soar aloft unto the Heaven of Heavens, the way unto the Holy of Holies *is accessible, the vail is rent, the fore-runner is entred, and thou mayest have entrance too with thy Thoughts, and Desires, and Loves, and* Hopes *and Joyes; there thou mayst see and veiw, and admire, and embrace thy deerest Lord; there thy* Heart *may find a fit object for it's Love, even thy deerest Lord Jesus, who wil not re-*

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ject & despise thee, but give kind entertainment unto thy love, and withall give the fullest & sweetest returns; there thy Heart may find a room to dispose of it self, and not only a lodging like that of a wayfaring man for a night, but an habitation wherein to dwell and to take up it's Eternal abode; let thy Heart be thy fore-runner, that when thy body drops off from thee thou mayst know where to betake thy self and find ready entertainment there where thy Heart hath been long before. Why dost thou hang downwards O my Soul? why dost thou bend so much to the Earth and Earthly things? what is there here below that is not beneath thee, and altogether unworthy of thy Love? how empty, and vain, and thorny are these things? don't waste thy time, weary thy self for very vanity, don't prick and wound thy self with these things any more. What aileth thee O my Soul, that thou art so backward to the Love of Christ? is it because thou canst not see Christ with the Eyes of thy Body? thou shalt see him with those Eyes hereafter, when he comes in his Glory, & thy body is raised and repaired, and fitted to bear such a sight; thou can'st not see the Wind, but thou heareſt it's noise, and feeleſt it's blasts; and dost thou not hear Christ's voice in his Word? dost thou not

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feel the breathings of his Spirit in his Ordinances. Thou art inviſible thy ſelf O my Soul, and art thou ſo drenched in fleſh, that viſible objects ſhall have more Power to draw down thy heart, than this moſt glorious object (though now inviſible) ſhall have power to draw up thy Heart? doſt thou queſtion and doubt of his love to thee? and doth this damp and diſcourage thy Affection? whoſe Image is this which is engraven upon thee? is it not the Image of Chriſt? what writing is that upon thy Heart? is it not Gods Law written by Chriſts Spirit? whoſe deckings and adornings haſt thou got about thee? what Beauty is this which is put upon thee? is it not Chriſts comelineſs? where hadſt thou thoſe Bracelets, that Ring, thoſe Jewels, that chain of Graces? are they not Chriſt's love-tokens which he hath given thee? and yet wilt thou doubt of his love? if thou feeleſt corruption ſtrong, yet doſt thou not perceive ſome Grace? although it be weak? haſt thou not ſome love to Chriſt, although it be low? are not thy deſires chiefly after him, which evidence that thy chief love is to him? and is it ſo with any but ſuch whom Chriſt doth love? doth not Chriſt love firſt? and yet wilt thou queſtion his love? baniſh then thy fears, ſilence thy doubts O my Soul, rouze up thy ſelf and

climb

climb up by the Jacobs ladder which is let down to thee from Heaven, and settle thy love upon Jesus Christ and those things which are above, where Christ sits at the Right hand of God. Such retired Contemplations of Christ, and Soliloquies and pleadings with your own Souls when alone by your selves, will tend exceedingly to the promotion of your love unto Christ.

2. Would you have much love to Christ? Be much in Reading and Studying the Scriptures. The Scriptures are a Glasse in which Christ may be seen, he cannot be seen Face to Face in this World, this is the happiness of the Triumphant Church in Heaven, not of the Militant Church upon the Earth; what may here be discerned of Christ, it is in the glass of the Scriptures and Gospel-Ordinances: this is that glass spoken of, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. *We all with open face beholding as in a glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from Glory to Glory.* Christ is the Glory of the Lord, the brightness of his Fathers Glory? would you have much love to him, be often looking, veiwing and beholding of him in the glass of the Scriptures, by much beholding of him, you may be transformed more and more into the likeness of his

his Holineſs, and into the likeneſs of his Love, which is Glory begun. The Scriptures have the Image of Chriſt engraven upon them; the Image of the Father is upon the Son, and the Image of the Son is upon the Scriptures; there you may ſee the Picture of Chriſt, the Beauty of Chriſt, at leaſt ſome lineaments are there drawn by the hand of God, although not fully and to the life, I mean ſuch you will ſee in him when you come to behold him face to face in Heaven; yet his Beauty is drawn in ſuch proportions and with ſuch ſhadows as you are now capable of beholding. Would you have much love unto Chriſt whom you have never ſeen? look much upon his Picture and Image in the Scriptures. The Scriptures are Chriſts Love letters. In the ſecond and third Chapters of *Revelations*, Chriſt doth ſend Seven Epiſtles to the Seven *Aſian* Churches; there are many Epiſtles and Love-letters as it were in the Scriptures, eſpecially in the New Teſtament, wherein Chriſt doth give moſt kind expreſſions of moſt endeared Love unto his People. Read much and ſtudy Chriſt's Love-letters, eſpecially thoſe parts of the Scriptures wherein Chriſt doth expreſs moſt of his kindneſs and love. See how kindly Chriſt doth expreſs himſelf,

ſelf, *Joh.* 14. *v.* 1, 2, 3, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27. *Chap.* 15. *v.* 9. 13, 14, 15, 16. *Chap.* 16. *v.* 7. 22, 24, 26, 27. 33. *Chap.* 17. *v.* 9, 10, 11, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. *Chap.* 20. *v.* 17. Read often and conſider ſuch places. Let the Word of Chriſt dwell richly in you, and his will feed and maintain your love to Chriſt, this is a means to have Chriſt dwell in your hearts, not onely by Faith, but alſo by moſt endeared Love.

3. Would you have much Love to Chriſt? be much in *Prayer* unto God for this Love. *Eph.* 6. 23. *Peace be unto the Brethren and love with Faith from God the Father.* Not onely Peace is from God, who is called the God of Peace, and Faith from God, who works it by his Almighty power; but alſo Love is from God, who is the God of Love; he circumciſeth the heart to love himſelf, and to love his Son. This love of Chriſt is a Grace of the Spirit, which God doth freely give and powerfully work, the Beginnings of it, the Increaſe of it, all the Meaſures and Degrees of it are from him; If you would attain high meaſures of love to Chriſt, you muſt apply your ſelves unto God in Prayer, and therein diligently ſeek to him for it.

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If you would have much love to Chriſt in your hearts, you muſt be often at the Throne of Grace upon your Knees; and there humbly acknowledge, if not the want, yet the weakneſs of your love to Chriſt, bewail your Sins which do damp your Affections, and earneſtly requeſt that he would work your hearts unto a ſtrong love; be importunate in Prayer for this, follow God day by day with the ſame requeſts, plead with him for it, fill your mouths with Arguments, and fill your Arguments with Faith and fervent Deſires. Tell him, whatever lovelineſſe and love there be in Chriſt, whatever attractives to draw forth your love, yet of your ſelves you are utterly unable to put forth the leaſt motion of true affection unto Chriſt. Tell him, that this love to Chriſt, though it be your Duty, yet it is his Gift, that you ought to act it, but this you cannot do, unleſs he works it. Tell him how eaſily he can enkindle this Fire of Love to Chriſt in your boſoms, and blow it up into a flame. Tell him, he hath bid you to ask and you ſhall have, and whatever you ask according to his will he heareth, and that it is his will you ſhould love Chriſt not onely truely but alſo ſtrongly. Tell him, you deſire much love to Chriſt,

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and that these desires do come from himself, and therefore earnestly desire the fulfilling of them. Tell him, if you do not love Christ much, you shall be apt to overlove the Creature, which will be displeasing to him, therefore request that you may have such a love to Christ as may overpower all other love, and keep your hearts from all Inordinacy of affections to any thing beneath and besides the Lord Jesus Christ. Plead how much it will be for his Glory, that you should have much love unto Christ, that hereby you shall be enabled to honour him the more in the world. Plead how much it will be for your good; tell him, if you asked Corn and Wine and Oyl; if you asked Wealth and Honours, and Creature-delights in abundance, they might be a snare to you, and for your hurt; but a strong love to Christ is needfull and usefull, and be sure will be for your good; urge his Promise of *Circumcising the heart to love him*, and plead his Faithfulness; and if you be thus importunate in Prayer for much love to Christ, and will not be denyed, you shall not be denyed.

4. Would you have much Love to Christ, get much Faith. Faith worketh Love both to the Father and to the Son;

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According to the meaſure of your Faith, ſo will the meaſure of your Love be: Such as are without any Faith, are without any Love; ſuch as have but a feeble faith, have but a weak love; and ſuch as have the ſtrongeſt faith, have the ſtrongeſt love. The ſtrongeſt faith giveth the cleareſt diſcovery of Chriſts infinite Excellencies and Perfections; It is not the eye of Senſe which doth diſcern Chriſt, neither is it the eye of Reaſon which doth diſcern him; whatever diſcoveries we have of Chriſt, it is by Revelation, and this is diſcernable onely by Faith. Faith is the Evidence of things not ſeen, and the unſeen Chriſt is evident by Faith to be the moſt excellent Perſon, and the moſt ſutable Object of love, and the more evident the Object of love is, the ſtronger will the love be. Moreover, Faith is not onely the Eye of the Soul to diſcern Chriſt, but alſo the Hand of the Soul, not onely to take hold on him, but alſo to receive from him of his Fulneſs Grace for Grace, and by conſequence more of this Grace of love to him. Our Communion with Chriſt is by Faith; the more intimate acquaintance and fellowſhip we have with thoſe whom we love, the more endeared will be our love; the ſtrongeſt Faith brings us unto

the greatest intimacy, fellowship and familiarity with Christ, and therefore it is a means of the strongest Love. Endeavour then to get a strong Faith, and to live daily in the powerfull exercise thereof; the more you live by Faith, the more you will dwell in the Love of Christ.

5. Would you have much Love unto Christ? labour for much of the *Spirit*; labour for much of the Light of the Spirit; There must be not onely the Glass of the Scriptures, and the Eye of Faith, but also the Light of the Spirit, that you may have a clear discerning of this lovely Lord Jesus; Labour for much of the Operation of the Spirit; the Spirit is like Wind to blow up the Sparks of Love in your hearts into a flame. Labour for the inhabitation of the Spirit, and that the Promise may be made good to you which Christ giveth to his Disciples. *Joh.* 14.16,17. *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth, whom the World cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

6. Would

6. Would you have much Love unto Christ? labour for clear Evidences of his Love unto you; the apprehensions of Christ's Lovelinesse may excite to some love, but the full well-grounded perswasions of Christs love to you, will above all heighten your love to Christ. Doubts of Christ's love do cause fears, and fears do contract the heart, and therefore are opposite to love, which is the expansion and enlargement of the heart; perfect love casteth out fear, the more love, the less fear, and the more doubts and fears the less love. Such as doubt much of Christs love to them, they may love Christ truely, but they cannot love Christ strongly. You will love a less lovely person that loves you, more than a more lovely person that hates you; the love of the Person beloved is a most amiable Qualification and strong attractive, yea one of the greatest Incentives and Inducements unto love. Get then a perswasion of the infinite love to you of this Infinitely lovely person, that you may be able to say with *Paul*, Gal. 2.20. *Who loved me, and gave himself for me.* Look diligently into the Word of God, and find out the Characters there of those that are Beloved by Christ; and then look narrowly into your

ſelves, and ſee whether your face will not anſwer that face in the Looking-glaſs of the Scriptures; ſee whether you cannot find the lineaments of the New Man within you, whether you have not experienced a gracious change; Is there not Light where there was Darkneſs? Is there not Life where there was Death? Is there not Love where there was Hatred? Is there not the Law of God written, where the Law of Sin did command all? Is not the Biaſs of your Wills and Hearts Godward, and Chriſt-ward, and Heaven-ward? which heretofore was onely Sin-ward and Earth-ward and Hell-ward? Pray earneſtly unto God, that he would give you a full aſſurance, that if you are indeed effectually called, if you are indeed united and related unto Jeſus Chriſt, you may know it, and no longer doubt thereof. In a word, ſeek diligently after the Manifeſtations of Chriſt's Love in all the wayes of his Ordinances; reſt not in the out-ſide of Ordinances, but ſeek after Chriſt in Ordinances, follow him from Sabbath to Sabbath, from Ordinance to Ordinance, and always be looking for him, and looking towards him, till he turn about and look upon you, and give you a gracious ſmile; ſeek and wait for that Manifeſta-

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tion of himself which he hath promised to hem that love him, *Joh.* 14. 21. Wait for his Mission of the Holy Ghost from Heaven, 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. to shed abroad the sense of his Love into your hearts, *Rom.* 5. 5. and if you did know assuredly and had a sense hereof given unto you by the Spirit of Christ, O the Joyes which then you would have in him! O the love which then you would have to him! As your Joyes would be unspeakable, so your Love would be unspeakable too; such a warmth of heart and burning of love to Christ you would feel within you, as is beyond the Rhetorick of the Tongue to set forth.

7. Would you have much Love to Christ? get much hatred of Sin, and accordingly watch and pray, and strive and fight against Sin, as the worst of Evils, as that which doth so much displease your Lord. Bewail sins of daily incursion, and labour that your sins of Infirmity may be less every day than other; Take heed of sins of sudden surprize, but chiefly of designed sins, and that you comply not with any temptations unto grosser miscarriages, which like water cast upon the Fire of your love to Christ, will put out the

flame, and leave onely a few unperceivable ſparks in the corner of your hearts. Suffer not Sinne to have any room in your hearts, or if it will abide and you cannot thruſt it quite out, let it not have a quiet habitation within you; diſturb ſin as much as you can, wage war every day with your remaining Luſts, let no day paſs over your heads without giving ſome blows, ſome thruſts and wounds to Sin. Streighten the room of Sin in your hearts as much as may be; the more room Sin hath in your hearts, the leſs room Chriſt will have there. Particularly, take heed of inordinate love to the world, and the things in the world, the prevalency of which love will damp your love to Chriſt; by how much more the world gets of your love, by ſo much the leſs Chriſt will have of it. A ſubordinate love you may have to Perſons and Things in the world, but let no perſon or thing have your chief love but only Chriſt; love nothing for it ſelf with an abſtracted love, but love all inferiour things with inferiour love, love all under the Lord, and in the Lord, and for the Lord's ſake; get all inordinate affections to the world crucified by the Croſs of Chriſt. You muſt have dying affections to periſhing things, if you would

would have a living and active love to the ever-living Jeſus.

8. Would you have much love unto Chriſt? aſſociate your ſelves moſt with thoſe that have moſt love unto Chriſt; you may fetch light from their light, & you may fetch warmth from their Fire; dead coals are enkindled by the living, and your dead hearts may be enkindled with love to Chriſt by the warm diſcourſe of thoſe that have warm hearts. Be ready to ſpeak of Chriſt and for Chriſt in any company as you have fit opportunity, and diligently watch for an Occaſion; ſhut your ears againſt and reprove profane & filthy Communication; divert that which is vain and frothy, and be ready to begin and promote that which is ſerious & ſavoury, that which is gracious and may tend to your own and others Edification; Study the Art, and practiſe it, of provoking all whom you converſe withall, not unto Strife and Contention, but unto this love and Affection unto the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and whileſt you are endeavouring to warm others with this Love, you may be warmed your ſelves.

9. And laſtly, Would you have much Love unto Chriſt? be much in the exerciſe of this love, hereby it is encreaſed

and heightned; Uſe legs and have legs; and if you act this love frequently, it will hereby get ſtrength and Activity; every day endeavour to put forth ſome vigorous acts of love unto Jeſus Chriſt. In your ordinary Callings and ſecular Buſineſs and Employment, you may ſend up ſome looks of Love unto Jeſus Chriſt in your Ejaculations. But eſpecially in the Duties of Gods immediate Worſhip, labour that your love may flow out unto Chriſt moſt vigorouſly. In your daily ſecret Devotion and Family-Worſhip, let love to Chriſt draw forth tears from your eyes, at leaſt cauſe grief and ſorrow in your hearts, in the acknowledgement of your ſins, whereby he hath been diſhonoured and diſpleaſed. Let love to Chriſt draw forth earneſt deſires after Chriſt, and thoſe communications, manifeſtations, and conſolations which he doth give to none but ſuch as are his; let love to Chriſt put requeſts into your mouths, arguments into your requeſts, and fervour into your arguments in your pleadings with him at the Throne of Grace for further ſupplyes of his Grace, and that you may be brought into more intimacy of acquaintance with him. Every day you ſhould expreſs your love to Chriſt, eſpecially on the Lords day, when almoſt

almoſt the whole day is to be ſpent in publick and private Exerciſes of Religious Worſhip, in all your love to Chriſt ſhould be in exerciſe; in your attendances upon him in Ordinances you muſt bring not only your Bodies before him, but preſent your Hearts unto him; this you ſhould be carefull to do in publick Prayer and Hearing of the Word, Preaching and Singing Pſalms; often ſhould you endeavour in every Ordinance to lift up your hearts unto the Lord; but above all when you approach the Lords Table, all your Graces ſhould there and then be in exerciſe, eſpecially this Grace of love to Jeſus Chriſt, your Eye there ſhould affect your Heart, when you ſee the repreſentations of your crucified *Lord*, and think what manner of *Love* he did bear to you, that he ſhould ſubmit himſelf unto ſuch a Death for you, how ſhould this affect your hearts! And if ever, then your *Love* to Chriſt ſhould ſhew it ſelf, and act with the greateſt vigour and ſtrength.

SECT. XVII.

HAving given Directions how to attain love to Christ in the truth and in the strength of it, I come now to the last sort of Directions wherein you should shew your love to Jesus Christ.

More generally shew your Love to Christ in your Obedience unto Christ, *Joh.* 14. 15. *If ye love me, keep my Commandements.* Be faithfull in the performance of all known Duties which Christ doth command, and be carefull in the forbearance of all known sins which Christ doth forbid; let your great care be to please Christ, whoever is displeased; and your great fear be of offending Christ, whoever be offended with your strictness. Shew your love,
1. In the *Sincerity* of your Obedience,
2. In the *Willingness* of your Obedience,
3. In the *Universality* of your Obedience,
4. In the *Constancy* of your Obedience.

1. Shew your love to Christ, in the *Sincerity* of your Obedience. Hypocrites will do some things which Christ commandeth, but

but it is from carnal Motives and with carnal Designs; But let love to Christ be the Motive, and the Honour of Christ the End of your Obedience; obey Christ because you love him, and with a design to please him; what you do, do heartily unto the Lord, and above all things desire and endeavour that what you doe may find acceptation with him. 2 *Cor.* 5. 9. *Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him.*

2. Shew your love to Christ in the *Willingness* of your Obedience; some will obey Christ, but it is with great Backwardness, they will perform Duties, but they are burdensome, a weariness, and toilsome, and the Commandements of Christ are grievous unto them; they are scarce ready unto any Duty, but when they are scourg'd unto it by the Rods of Affliction, or spurr'd and prickt forward by the goads of Conscience; O the listlesness and indisposition in the most, unto the most spiritual part of the Service of Christ! which is an evident proof of the defect of love, either in the truth of it, or at least in the measure and degree of it. Let your love shew it self in the *willingness* of your Obedience, serve the Lord with a willing

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and ready mind, with alacrity and chearfulness of spirit, looking upon the Service of Christ as your Honour, and esteeming every Duty to be your Priviledge: If you have any constraints unto Obedience, let them be the constraints of love; as 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. If you be forced to obey Christ, let there be no violence but the violence of love; if you be drag'd to Duty, let it be with no other cords than the cords of love; let love be the Spur and Goad to prick you forward, that you may not onely walk but run in the wayes of Christs commandements with an enlarged heart.

3. Shew your love to Christ in the *Universality* of your Obedience. Hypocrites will perform some Duties which are for their turn, and will serve their carnal designs; other duties they omit and totally neglect; let your love to Christ discover it self in your respect to all his Commandments; though you cannot here attain Perfection of Obedience, yet let your Obedience be universal; obey Christ not only in open Duties, which men are witnesses of, but also in secret Duties, and spiritual Duties, which depend upon the exercise of the Mind, such as Meditation, Contemplation, Self-search, and Ejacula-

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tion, as also in the spiritual part of all Duties, which no Eye can be witness unto but the Eye of God; and hereby you may be distinguished from all Hypocrites in the world.

4. Shew your love to Christ in the *Constancy* of your Obedience. *Gal.* 5. 7. *Ye did run well, who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth?* Some Hypocrites are zealous Professors for a while, and at first setting out seem to outstrip many that are sincere, but they soon tire, and are weary not onely *in* well-doing but *of* it; they quickly stumble and fall, and not onely fall down, but fall off; not only fall back, but fall away, and turn fearfull Apostates. Shew your love to Christ not onely in setting out well, but in continuing your Christian course well unto the end of the course of your Lives; begin well, and patiently continue in well-doing: Persevere in your Obedience; *Be not weary in well-doing*, knowing that *in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not*, Gal. 6. 9. And if you *be faithfull unto death*, Christ hath promised to *give you the Crown of Life*, Rev. 2. 10.

More particularly, shew your love to Christ, 1. In your learning, keeping, asserting,

asserting and maintaining of Christ's truths. 2. In your publick spiritedness and zeal for Christs honour and interest. 3. In your vigorous resistance and opposition of Christs Enemies. 4. In your Following of Christ's example. 5. In your readiness to take up and patiently to bear Christs cross. 6. In your desires after Christs presence here, a longing for Christ's second appearance at the last day.

1. Shew your love to Christ in your learning, keeping, asserting and maintaining Christ's Truths. 1. Learn Christ's Truths; acquaint your selves by diligent reading of the Scriptures, and other books that may be a help hereunto, with all fundamental truths of the Christian Religion in the first place, and so go on and proceed further to learn those truths which are superstructory; and whatever truths you find a Foundation for in the Scriptures which are the word of Truth, receive them, not only in the light of them, but also in the love of them; if the branches of truths be in your heads, and the leaves of them in your profession, and the fruit of them in your actions, let the root of them be in your Hearts. 2. Having learned the truths of Christ as they are in Jesus, let them not hang loose in your understandings

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but get them fastened and fixed, and close girt about the loins of your mindes; hold the truths of Christ fast, prize them above all jewels, don't part with them upon any terms; let all go, estate, liberty and life it self, rather than any of this rich treasure which Christ hath entrusted you withal. 3. Assert the truths of Christ; be not ashamed or afraid to own any truths of Christ in the most adulterous & gainsaying generation, profess your belief of Christ and of the truths of Christ, endeavour that the light of these truths may shine abroad, and cast forth such bright beams in the dark world where you live, that others may be brought hereby unto the knowledge of the Truth. 4. Endeavour to maintain Christ's truths, earnestly contend for the Doctrine of Faith once delivered to the Saints, endeavour to convince gainsayers, and to defend Christ's truths against those corrupt and erroneous opinions and Doctrins, which like leaven is very apt to spread and infect the mindes of men.

2. Shew your love to Christ in your publick spiritednes, and zeal for Christ's honour and interest: let your affections be publick not private, narrow, contracted and centring in self; let your love be a

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publick and general love, Love not only Relations, but love all Christ's disciples, though of different Perswasions and interests, because of the image of Christ; & love not only your Friends that love you, but also your Enemies that hate you, because of the command of Christ. Let your desires be publick desires, desire the welfare of the univeral Church, and of all Gods people throughout the world, and accordingly Pray for their Peace and Prosperity, and endeavour as you have opportunity to promote the publick good more than your own private advantage; seek not your own things, but the things of Jesus Christ. Let your griefs be publick griefs, grieve not only for your own sins, but also for the sins of others, whereby Christ is dishonoured in the world; grieve not only for your own afflictions, but also for the afflictions of *Joseph*, *Heb.* 13, 3. *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them which suffer adversity, as being your selvs also in the body.* You are in the same mystical body with all Christ's afflicted members, and when some members suffer, the rest should suffer too, by way of sympathy. Bleeding in their wounds and grieving in their sorrows, be ready also to relieve any, especially Christ's disciples when they are

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in distresse and want according to your capacity and as you have opportunity. Employ all your Talents for your Masters glory, and endeavour to promote the interest of the Lord Jesus unto the utmost of your abilities. 1. In reference to those which are without. If you are called your selves, labour to call others unto Christ, as *Andrew* called *Peter*, *Phillip* called *Nathaniel* unto the *Messias*, *John* 1. 40, 41. 44, 45. If you have found the *Messias*, or rather have been found of him, let your love to Christ, and love to Souls prompt you, to endeavour the Conversion of others that are your Relations, your Friends and Acquaintances. Put your unconverted Friends in mind of their miserable Estates whilst under the guilt and reigning power of sin, whil'st slaves to the Devil and their own lusts; mind them of Death and the fearful consequences thereof to all unpardoned sinners; tell them of Christ that he is the only Saviour and Redeemer of Mankind. How able and willing he is to save them, if they seek after him and apply themselves unto him; tell them that not long since you were in the same estate with themselves, living in the practice of the same sins and going on in the same way to destruction; and that the Lord hath shewed

ſhewed mercy unto you in your Converſion, and bringing you into a ſtate of Salvation: tell them that there is mercy alſo for them if they look after it, that Gods Grace is moſt free, his mercy moſt plentiful, that Chriſt is moſt Gracious and caſteth out none that come unto him: tell them of the amiableneſſe of Chriſt's Perſon, of the ſurpaſſing love which he hath ſhewn to fallen mankind in his dying for them; and that though he were dead, yet he is alive and lives for evermore to intercede for all them that make choice of him, & make uſe of him for their Advocate. Therefore perſwade them that they would break off their ſins by Repentance, which otherwiſe will be the ruine both of their bodies and of their Souls in Hell, and without delay that they would come unto Chriſt and accept of him upon Goſpel-terms. If any of you cannot manage theſe arguments well your ſelves perſwade them, if you can, to hear ſuch Miniſters and Sermons, as through Gods bleſſing have been effectual for your Converſion, and thus you may be inſtrumental to augment the Kingdom of Chriſt, which is one of the beſt ways of expreſſing your love unto Chriſt. 2. In reference to them which are within; labour to promote the intereſt of Chriſt amongſt them that are

are truly Gracious, by vigorous endeavors to strengthen and establish them, to quicken and encourage them in the wayes of the Lord : Communicate the experiences which you have had, as you see there is real need, and it may tend not so much to your praise as your Masters honour. Labour in your places to be both shineing and burning lights ; be forward to every good word and work. Look upon your selves as the devoted Servants of Christ, and that you are not your own, and therefore lay out your selves to the utmost for him, and give all diligence to glorifie him with your bodies and spirits, with your Estates and interests, with your gifts and talents, all which are his, and ought to be at his devotion.

3. Shew your love to Christ in your vigorous resistance and opposition of Christ's Enemies. There are three grand Enemies of Christ which you are by your Baptisme engaged to fight against, namely the Devil, the Flesh, and the World which war both against Christ, and against your Souls. This Trinity of Adversaries agree in one, and combine together against his anointed, doing their utmost endeavour to break his bands, to untye his cords, and to unhinge his Government ; they would pluck the Crown

Crown off of Christ's head could they reach it, and the Scepter out of his hand, they would deveſt Chriſt if they could of all his power here on Earth, and confine him to his territories in Heaven; but all their attempts in this kind have been and will be in vain, Chriſt hath tryed the ſtrength of theſe Enemies and hath vanquiſhed them, but ſtill ſome life and power is left with them to war againſt the holy ſeed; you are Chriſts Souldiers, liſted under his banner, ſhew your fidelity and your love to your Captain and General, in manfully maintaining the ſpiritual combat againſt his and your ſpiritual Enemies; fight the good fight of Faith, reſiſt unto blood, don't yeild upon any account; diſdainfully turn away the Eye and Ear when theſe Enemies would entice and allure you, and ſtoutly make reſolute oppoſition againſt them, when they do moſt furiouſly aſſault you; hearken to no ſuggeſtions of the Devil, temptations of the world or motions of the Fleſh which would induce and draw you into ways of ſin, or which would force and drive you out of the ways of Chriſt; reſiſt and oppoſe, and labour to gain ſome victories over theſe adverſaries every day, eſpecially get conqueſt over the Fleſh, and the other two will be

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ſoon vanquiſhed; Chriſt ſhewed his love to you in ſubmitting himſelf to be Crucifyed for you, do you ſhew your love to Chriſt in Crucifying your Fleſh with its affections and luſts for his ſake, in your ſelf-denial and mortifying the deeds of the body, when you deny your Carnal Reaſon your carnal Wiſedome, your carnal will, your carnal Affections, your carnal intereſt, all inordinacies of your ſenſual appetite for the ſake of Chriſt; when you cruſh pride, Envy, Revenge, Malice, inordinate anger, inordinate love, inordinate deſire, inordinate grief, luſtfullneſs and all evil concupiſcence for the ſake and becauſe of the command of Chriſt, all theſe are acts and evidences of love to Chriſt, and herein you ſhould exerciſe your ſelves daily.

4. Shew your love to Chriſt in your following of his example, diſcover your affection unto him in your imitation of him, in writing after his copy, in treading in his ſteps, in walking as Chriſt himſelf walked, when he was here upon the Earth, ſhew your love to Chriſt by labouring after likeneſs unto Chriſt, that you may be like him both in your inward diſpoſition and in your outward converſation: Chriſt was lovely,

lowly, be you humble and mean in your own esteem: Christ was meek, be you gentle, easie to be intreated, and not easily provoked: Christ loved God, let God be the object of your love: Christ hated sin, let sin also be the object of your hatred: Christ contemned the world, do you get crucifyed affections unto it. Christ was compassionate to those that were in distresse, do you labour for the like bowels. Christ used to Worship publickly in the Synagogues, to pray with his Disciples, and to spend time also in secret prayer, do you give your attendance in the publick assemblies of Gods people, worship God in your Families, and be often upon your knees at the Throne of Grace in secret. Christ's mind was a heavenly mind, let the same mind be in you as was in Christ. Christ's will was submissive to his Fathers will, let the same will be in you as was in Christ. Christ's words were Gracious and edifying, let your speech be always with Grace, savoury and which may be for edification. Christ's life was an active life, he was always doing good, and he was exactly holy in all his actions, be you active and diligent in the service of God in doing good to others, and be holy as Christ was holy in all manner of converfation

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on, thus should you shew your love to Christ in following Christs example, and in imitating of him in every thing wherein you are capable of such imitation.

5. shew your love to Christ in your readiness to take up and patiently bear Christ's cross: I don't say you should desire sufferings for Christ, but sure I am that strong love to Christ will not permit you to decline them; don't go out of God's way for them, neither go out of God's way from them, if you meet with the cross in the way of duty, don't either turn back, or start aside, but chearfully take it up, & when you have got it up, patiently bear it, and don't throw it off, till God take it off; when it is your duty to suffer for Christ, look upon it also to be your priviledge and be glad of the opportunity, rejoycing that you have any thing to part withal for the sake of Christ; if it be good name, or good estate, or good Friends, if it be liberty or life it self; such expressions of love are very honourable and very pleasing to your Lord and Master.

6. And lastly, Shew your love to Christ in your desires after Christ's presence here, and in your longing for his second appear-

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ance at the laſt day. 1. Deſire Chriſt's Gracious preſence here, and the manifeſtations thereof, that according to his promiſes he would come unto you, that he would draw near, and that you might feel that he is near; deſire that you might have clearer diſcoveries of Chriſt, and more intimate communion and fellowſhip with Chriſt; above all company and fellowſhip, deſire the company fellowſhip and acquaintance with Chriſt, that you might walk with him and converſe with him, and that there might be a dayly intercourſe between Chriſt and your ſouls, and that all diſtances between you, and ſtrangeneſs might be removed; let your love expreſs it ſelf in deſires after Chriſt when he is abſent, and in delights when he is preſent; rejoice in the Lord exceedingly when he doth manifeſt himſelf unto you graciouſly, admire his beauty and delight in his ſmiles, admire his love and delight in the perſwaſions of his favour, let the actings of your love, and the workings of it, be ſuch to your beloved dayly. 2. Deſire alſo and long for the ſecond appearance of Chriſt at the laſt day; when he ſaith, *Surely I come quickly*, do you ſay, *Amen, Even ſo come Lord Jeſus.* Look upon time as ſlow of heel and wing, that it runs no faſter, that it

it flies no ſwifter; look to the End of Time, and long for it, becauſe then with theſe Eyes you ſhall ſee him whom your ſoul loveth, becauſe then you ſhall ſee Chriſt come down from the Throne of God with ſuch Brightneſs of Majeſty, and Brightneſs of Beauty, as will tranſport you with Wonder and Joy. Say, *When Lord Jeſus wilt thou take to thy ſelf thy great Power, and cloath thy ſelf with thy Authority, and come down to judge the World? when wilt thou open the everlaſting gates of Heaven which have been ſhut ſo long? When wilt thou deſcend from Heaven with a ſhout, with the ſound of the great Trumpet, and ſend thine Angels to gather all thine Elect from the four Winds, that all who love thee may meet in one Society? when ſhall we put on our Garments of Immortality, and be caught up in the Clouds to meet thee in the day of thy Triumph? When ſhall the day of our Coronation come, and of our admiſſion into the Glorious Manſions which thou haſt prepared for us in the Glorious Pallace which is above? When wilt thou ſhew us thy ſelf, and give us to behold thee face to face? When wilt thou ſhew us the Father, and give us to behold him immediately without a Glaſs? When wilt*

thou shew us thy Glory which thou hadst with the Father before the World was, and give us not onely to see it, but also to share in it? When wilt thou open the Treasures of thy Love, and receive us into the neareſt, cloſeſt, and ſweeteſt embracements thereof, and give us to drink of thoſe Rivers of Pleaſures which are with thee? O haſten Lord, haſten thy glorious appearance, that thou mayeſt be Glorified before the whole World, and we be glorified with thee, that we may be then taken to live with thee, and reign with thee, and be made perfectly happy in the full and everlaſting enjoyment of thee.

Thus I have done with theſe Directions, the laſt thing in this Uſe of Exhortation.

And what do you now ſay after all Motives to excite and perſwade you to the Love of Chriſt, and Directions therein? ſhall all be in vain?

What do you ſay, Sinners? ſhall Chriſt have your hearts or no? will you harbour baſe luſts in your hearts, that will damn you, and keep out the Lord Jeſus Chriſt who alone can ſave you? ſhall I gain no hearts for Chriſt by all my Sermons which I have preached concerning the Love of Chriſt? My Lord and Maſter

Maſter hath ſent me to woe you, to win your hearts for him; may I ſpeed or no? ſhall my Meſſage be accepted, and Jeſus Chriſt the moſt lovely perſon find entertainment with you? If any perſon or thing in the world which you do moſt dearly love, do ſo well deſerve your love, lock your ears ſtill againſt all my words, and let them periſh like an empty ſound in the Air; lock your hearts againſt Chriſt, who ſtands knocking at the door, and give an abſolute and peremptory refuſal to give him any room there; But if in the whole world you cannot find out a ſuitable Beloved beſides Chriſt, if there be nothing here below but is unworthy of your hearts, if all inferiour things whileſt they have your chief Love do debaſe you and defile you, and unleſs your hearts be taken off from them, will certainly ruine and deſtroy you everlaſtingly; O then be perſwaded without any further delay to open the everlaſting doors of your hearts, to let Chriſt into them, and ſet Chriſt up in the higheſt ſeat of your Affections; O be perſwaded to give Chriſt your chief Love, to give him your Heart, and your whole heart; with grief and hatred let go your hold of ſin, and embrace the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the

Arms of your deareſt Love. And then I would ſay to you as our Saviour did to *Zacheus* when he gave him entertainment in his houſe, *This day is Salvation come unto you.* O happy day unto you! O happy you that ever you were born, if this day Chriſt ſhould be heartily entertained by you! This then would be the day of your Converſion, in which the Angels would rejoyce; and though Grief and Trouble might invade you for a while becauſe of your ſin, yet this would make way for your ſpiritual Joy; weeping might endure for a Night, but joy would come in the Morning; but O the Joy which you will then have in the day of your Coronation, when all tears ſhall be wiped away from your Eyes, and when you ſhall have admiſſion into the glorious preſence of the Lord, where there is Fulneſs of Joy and Pleaſures for Evermore.

And what do you ſay, Believers? you that have ſome Love to Chriſt, ſhall this Doctrine, and theſe Sermons which I have preached, be a means to raiſe and heighten your Love? Your Love hath been too much mixed, will you love Chriſt more purely? your love hath been very weak, will you love Chriſt more ſtrongly?

ſtrongly? Your Love to Chriſt hath been but a ſpark, ſhall it now break forth into a flame? after ſuch blowings, ſhall there be no burnings? When you think of Chriſts Perſon ſo amiable, his Love ſo incomparable, his Benefits ſo ineſtimable, ſhall not this fire your hearts? and will you not now love him more dearly and ardently than ever? will you be perſwaded to get off your hearts from Earth and Earthly things, and get up your hearts to your Lord which is in Heaven, and to ſettle your Love there upon him, ſo as never to withdraw it from him any more? Will you love the Lord Jeſus much, whom you can never love too much? will you now dwell in the Love of Chriſt, and be more frequent and fervent in the actings of it? Then O what comfort would you find in your Love! and what ſweetneſs in the ſenſe of Chriſts Love! This would be the ſureſt Evidence that Chriſt loveth you, becauſe Chriſt loveth firſt; and how would this ſweeten your paſſage through the Valley of Affliction, and through the Valley of Death. This would ſweeten a bitter cup, and make a ſweet cup more ſweet. In Life, the ſenſe of Chriſts Love will be better than life; but at Death this will be the onely ſtay

and support which you can have, nothing else can give any well-grounded comfort in a dying-hour. Death rageth and playeth the Tyrant every where, shooteth his Arrowes hither and thither, sometimes he smiteth those that are Elder than your selves, and sometimes those that are Younger; sometimes those that are weaker than your selves, sometimes those that are stronger; sometimes those that are better, sometimes those that are worse; sometimes the righteous are smitten, sometimes the wicked; sometimes the prophane, and sometimes the Professors; that all might be awakened to prepare. And what is it that can give you comfort when you come to the sides of the pit? You may have the Love of your dear Yoke-fellowes, weeping and mourning at your Bed-side, Children Kindred and Friends wringing their hands, and looking with a pitifull countenance upon you, grieving to part with you, but what comfort can all their Love yield unto your departing Spirits? their Love may disturb you, and make you the more unwilling to dye and leave them, because they are so unwilling to part with you. But the Love of Christ and sense thereof, will be a Comfort indeed, because he

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is a Friend whom you are not departing from, but going unto, and O the delight which then you may have, when Friends look moſt ſad, and Death looks moſt grim, when the trembling Joynts, the clammy Sweats, the intermitting Pulſe, the falling Jawes, the ratling Throat, and other ſymptomes give notice of near approaching Death! then to think, *I am now come not onely to the Door of Eternity, but alſo to the Gate of my Fathers Houſe, where many Saints are gone before me, and many Angels are attending for me, and where my dearly beloved Jeſus is, and hath prepared for my Reception and eternal Habitation: Here are Friends about my Bed-ſide, who ere long will convey this Body to the Grave, to be fed upon by Worms, but here are Angels alſo by my bed-ſide waiting for my Soul, that ſo ſoon as it is looſned from this dying Carkaſe, they may convey me to the heavenly Paradiſe: Within a few minutes now, and I ſhall be with my deareſt Lord, where my Faith will be ſwallowed up in Viſion, my Hope in Fruition, and my Love will come to Perfection. O the Glorious Light which there and then will ſhine into every corner of my mind! O the Love and Joy and ineffable Delight, when I come to ſee and*

enjoy and live for ever with my most dearly Beloved! This, This onely will make you willing to Dye, and this sense of Christ's Love will effectually sweeten your passage through the dark Entry of Death.

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An APPENDIX
Concerning
Chriſt's Manifeſtation of
Himſelf unto them that love him.

Joh. XIV. latter part of *verſ.* 21.

—*And he that loveth me, ſhall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him.*

WE read, *Luk.* 4.22. *And all bare him witneſs, and wondred at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.* Never did ſuch gracious and ſweet words drop from the lips of any man that ever lived, as thoſe from the lips of Chriſt when he was here upon the Earth; and of all Chriſt's words, thoſe which he ſpake to his Diſciples in his laſt Sermon, before his laſt Suffering, in the 14, 15, and 16 Chapters of *John*, are ſuperlatively ſweet, and none more ſweet in this Sermon than the words of my Text read unto you, *And*

he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest my self unto him. In the former part of the verse we have the Character of one that doth truely love Christ: *He that hath my Commandements and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.* In the latter part of the verse which is my Text, we have the Priviledge of one that doth truely love Christ, and that is in three Promises which Christ doth make unto him: 1. *He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father.* 2. *And I will love him.* 3. *And will manifest my self unto him.* It is the last of these Promises which I shall speak unto by way of *Appendix* unto my Treatise of the Love which true Christians have and ought to have unto Christ, and that is the Promise of Christs manifesting himself unto such as love him. And the Doctrine is this.

Doct. *That Christ will manifest himself unto such as love him.*

In handling of this point I shall shew, 1. What it is for Christ to manifest himself. 2. That Christ will manifest himself to them that love him. 3. How Christ doth manifest himself unto such. 4. When Christ doth manifest himself unto such. 5. Where Christ doth manifest himself unto such as love him. 6. And lastly, make some Application.

Sect.

Section I.

1. WHat it is for Christ to manifest Himself?

1. Christ doth manifest himself when he maketh a clearer discoverie unto His Disciples of the excellency of His Person, when he doth further unveil himself, and lets forth some beams and rays, with greater lustre and brightness, to discover more of the oriency and transcendency of his soul-ravishing beauty unto them, which they had but a dimmer sight and darker apprehensions of before; and this is done when Christ doth more fully impart of the spirit of wisdom and revelation unto them. Upon this account the Apostle did pray in the behalf of the believing *Ephesians*, that the Lord would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation to enlighten their understandings in the knowledge of him, *Eph.*1.16,17,18. they had the spirit before and some knowledge of Christ before, but he prayes that God would give them fuller measures of the spirit, to make a clearer discovery of Christ, that the eyes of their understandings might be more and more enlight-

enlightened unto a more ſpiritual diſcerning of the ſurpaſſing Beauty and Excellency in Chriſt's perſon, in the knowledge of whom the moſt enlightned Chriſtians are capable of further growth unto the end of their life, hence that Exhortation of the Apoſtle *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. *But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

2. Chriſt doth manifeſt himſelf, when he maketh a deep impreſſion, and giveth a ſweet ſenſe to his Diſciples of his preſence; Chriſt is never really abſent from ſuch as Love him, but he may Seem to be ſo ſometimes, they may apprehend him to be a far off, he may and often doth withdraw the ſenſe of his preſence; *Cant.* 5,6. *I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himſelf and was gone.* Chriſt doth manifeſt himſelf, when he doth draw near to his people, and maketh them feel that he is near, giving them a ſweet ſenſe of his preſence through the powerful breathings of his Spirit upon them, whereby their hearts are quickned and enlarged, and drawn forth towards himſelf, and their graces excited unto powerful exerciſe.

3. And chiefly Chriſt doth Manifeſt Himſelf, when He makes diſcovery of His

His Love unto them that love him; when He gives them to see not only the beauty of His face, but also the smiles of His face, when He gives them to behold the amiableness of His countenance, and withall lifts up upon them the light of His countenance, when he sheddeth abroad the sense of His Love into their hearts, giving them a full perswasion of His special Love unto them, and also a sweet sense thereof. Thus Christ doth sometime look kindly, and speak kindly unto his people, and this sweet Language is not spoken to the ear of the body, but inwardly by His Spirit to to their souls, when he saith to the soul, *I am thy salvation and thy Saviour, I have loved thee with an everlasting Love, and my Love is unchangeable; The Mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but my loving kindness shall never depart, and be removed from thee; I have given my self for thee, and I have given my self unto thee, and I will never repent of this gift; I have chosen thee for my self, called and joyned thee unto my self, and I will never repent of this choice, nor suffer thee to be disjoyned from me for ever; I have thee upon my heart, and keep thee in my hand, and no powers of Earth or Hell shall*

be able to pluck thee thence; I have given thee my grace, and I will ſhew thee my glory, and ere long I will appear in the world and receive thee to my ſelf, that where I am there thou mayeſt be alſo. Dry up then thy tears, clear up thy countenance, baniſh thy fears, droop no longer, diſpond no more, but be of good chear, thy ſins are forgiven thee, thy name is written in my book which none can blot out, Thou haſt a true Love for me, and my Father himſelf loveth thee, and I love thee with a moſt endeared Love, and therefore do not queſtion or doubt of my Love any more. Thus Chriſt doth manifeſt himſelf and his Love ſometimes unto drooping diſponding ſouls.

Section II.

2. THat Chriſt will manifeſt himſelf unto them that love him, appears, in that His Love doth engage Him, and His word doth engage Him hereunto. His Love doth engage Him, The Love of Chriſt is like fire, that cannot conceal it ſelf long, and no fire ſo ſtrong, and hath ſuch a vehement flame as the Love of Chriſt to His people. *Joſeph* had a great love to his Brethren notwithſtanding all their

their unkindneſs, and although he concealed himſelf for a while, and ſpake roughly unto them, yet after they were ſenſible of their fault, and were filled with perplexing fears, he could conceal himſelf no longer from them, as in *Gen.* 45. 1. *Then Joſeph could not refrain himſelf before all that ſtood by him, he wept aloud, and ſaid unto his brethren, I am Joſeph*, and ver. 4. *Joſeph ſaid unto his brethren, come near me, I am Joſeph your brother whom ye ſold into Egypt.* So Chriſt may conceal himſelf for a while from his people, whatever love he hath to them, and whatever they have to him; ſome unkindneſſes they have ſhewn may be the cauſe of this hiding, but when they are ſenſible of their fault, full of grief and perplexity for their offences, his Love will not permit him to hid himſelf much longer; His Love will engage Him to manifeſt and diſcover himſelf, and ſay, I am Jeſus your Saviour, come near me my brethren, come near me, that you may have a clearer view of me, that ye may know me and know that I do love you. The Word alſo of Chriſt doth engage him manifeſt Himſelf unto them that Love Him: It is Chriſts promiſe here in the Text, *He that loveth me ſhall be loved of my*

my Father, and I will Love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him. Chriſts word is ſure, True and faithfull is Chriſts name; the ordinances of the heaven may ſooner fail, than Chriſt fail of His Word and Promiſe.

Section III.

3. HOw Chriſt doth manifeſt Himſelf unto them that Love him.

1. Chriſt doth here in this world manifeſt himſelf but in part and darkly. The ſoul is not now capable of the fulleſt and cleareſt Manifeſtation of Chriſts, This is a happineſs reſerved for the other world, 1 *Ioh.* 3. 2. *Beloved now are we the ſons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be; but we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is, Joh.*17.24. *Father I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me.* It is Hereafter that Chriſts Diſciples ſhall be perfectly like unto Chriſt, and ſhall have a perfect manifeſtation of Chriſt, that they ſhall ſee him as he is: It is Hereafter that they ſhall behold his glory; The luſtre and

and brightness of Christs glory is so great that should he now let forth the beams thereof upon them, it would dazle and amaze them, it would strike them blinde, yea it would strike them dead; there is need, because of their weakness, that Christ should keep a veil on his face, when he makes discovery of himself, they cannot now bear the full satisfaction and manifestation of Christ; therefore Christ doth discover himself but in part. As the Queen of *Sheba* saith concerning *Solomons* wisdom and prosperity, 1 *King.*10. 6,7. *It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts, and thy wisdom; howbeit I believed not the words, until I came and mine eyes had seen it; and behold the one half was not told me, thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame thereof.* It is not the one half which Christs Disciples do now hear or can discern of their masters excellencies. It hath not now entred into their hearts to conceive what Beauties and Glories and most admirable perfections there are hid in their Beloved; not only Christ's Love but also Christ's Lovelines doth pass their knowledge; there are such dimensions of most wonderful Glory in Christ's person, as do infinitely transcend the capacity of the most elevated

elevated minds, fully to comprehend. Chriſt doth manifeſt himſelf truly to them that Love him, yet it is but partly, and that but a little part, it is but darkly by the beams of a more obſcure light, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9, 10, 11, 12. *For we know in part, and propheſie in part; But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away: When I was a child I ſpake as a child, I underſtood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man I put away childiſh things; For now we ſee thorow a glaſs darkly, but then Face to Face; Now I know in part, then I ſhall know as I am known.* We Miniſters Propheſie but in part, we can tell you but a little of what there really is in Chriſt, and both we and you know but in part; our conceptions of Chriſts excellencies and our expreſſions now are childiſh, hereafter there will be a perfect manifeſtation of Chriſt, and then all imperfections of knowledge will be removed. Now you may ſee Chriſt, but it is through a glaſs darkly; hereafter face to face: Indeed it is ſaid, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. *We all with open face beholding as in a glaſs the Glory of the Lord are changed, &c.* There is a comparative open diſcovery of Chriſt now in Goſpel-times, over what there was under

der the Law; the veil of Types and Figures, which covered and in a great meaſure hid Chriſt from the view, is now removed, our face is now open from that veil, but Chriſts face is not fully open, there is glaſs ſtill between our eye and Chriſt's face (the glaſs of Ordinances which though it doth help us to ſee him, yet it keeps us from the cleareſt diſcovery of him) we ſee but thorow a glaſs darkly; our eyes now need this glaſs to help our weakneſs, and that we may ſee what we do ſee: there is a time coming when we ſhall be above the need and uſe of the Ordinance-glaſſes, I mean when we ſhall ſee Chriſt face to face, and know him in heaven as we are known by him.

2. Chriſt doth now manifeſt himſelf gradually unto them that Love him, Chriſt doth not ſhew at once & altogether what he means to diſcover of himſelf and of his Love, but he doth it by degrees, a little at one time, and a little at another time, a little in this Ordinance, and a little in that; now he lets down ſome comfortable beams of the light of his countenance into the ſoul, by and by clouds do ariſe and obſcure this light, and darkneſs is upon the ſpirit: Sometimes Chriſt opens the curtain

tain and looks upon the ſoul, gives gracious ſmiles, by and by the curtain is drawn, and his face is hid; now he appears, and then he diſappears; he manifeſteth himſelf at one time, withdraws himſelf at another time, and ſo leads his people on from one diſcovery of himſelf unto another, until he bringeth them at laſt unto the full diſcovery of himſelf in Glory.

3. Chriſt doth manifeſt himſelf moſt ſweetly unto them that Love him, eſpecially after long abſence. When the ſoul hath been ſeeking and cannot finde him, wandring in the wilderneſs under amazing fears, perplexing doubts, doleful deſpondencies, ſinking and heart-overwhelming grief; after a black night of deep deſertion, Oh how ſweet is the day-ſpring from on high! Oh how comfortable are the bright beams of the morning light! when he ſhineth upon their dark and deſpiſed and ſorrowful ſpirits, giving them to know aſſuredly that they are the dearly beloved of his Soul, that he hath not forgotten them, that he will not forſake them, that he hath a more tender Love unto them than the mother to her ſucking child! Oh the raviſhments of ſpirit! Oh the tranſports of ſoul which do ariſe from hence!

hence! O the songs which are then in their mouths. This is our beloved, we have waited for him! this is our dear Redeemer we have trusted in him! Tongue cannot express the delight, the joy and gladness of heart, which doth arise from the manifestation of Christ's presence and love; the joy of harvest, the joy of the Bridegroom on the wedding day, the joy of victory and taking great spoils, spoils from an Enemy, the joy of a poor man in finding great treasures; and the greatest delight which ever was found in the sweetest sensual enjoyment is not worthy to be compared with the joys and exaltings of heart, in the manifestation of Christ unto the Soul.

SECT. IV.

4. WHen doth Christ manifest himself unto them that love him?

1. Sometime Christ doth quickly manifest himself, after a little seeking; some young Converts have early and soon discoveries of Christ and his love; they are cast down for a little while, and Christ soon comes unto them and lifts them up again; weeping endures but for a night, and

and that a ſhort ſummer night, and joy cometh early in the morning; they have the ſpirit of bondage who awakeneth them to fear, by & by the Spirit of Adoption doth graciouſly viſit them, and make diſcovery of their relation to the Father, the love of their Saviour, and ſheddeth abroad the ſenſe of his love into their hearts.

2. Sometimes Chriſt is long before he manifeſt himſelf; it is long before ſome do ſeek Chriſt, and it is long before ſuch do find him: Chriſt waites long to be gracious unto them, & Chriſt doth often make them wait long before he manifeſteth to them his loving kindneſſes; yea ſometimes early ſeekers are not early finders; Chriſt makes ſome wait a long time to try their faith and patience, their love and obedience, and that he may prepare them for more than ordinary comforts and ſweetneſs which he intendeth to give in the diſcovery of himſelf unto them.

3. Sometimes Chriſt doth ſuddenly manifeſt himſelf unto them that love him, *Cant.*6.12. *Or ever I was aware my Soul made me like the Charets of* Aminadab, or ever they are aware they ſee the Chariots of *Iſrael* and the horſemen thereof, and the

the Lord Jesus doth come unto them in the Chariots of Salvation with such Glory and Lustre as doth transport and amaze them. Some Christians that truely love Christ, have sought him in this Ordinance, and have not found him, and they have sought Christ in that Ordinance, and have not found him; they have been looking and waiting and hoping that at this time Christ would discover himself, or at that time he would discover himself, and still he hath hid himself, still they have come off with disappointment; this hath been their Grief, this they have complained of before God, and they have been under fears lest they should never see him, never meet with him at all; hereupon their Spirits have been ready to fail and sink within them, and in discouragement they have been ready to say or think that all their labour would be in vain; and yet they have resolved to seek him to their death, and though he should kill them, to put their trust in him: And behold on a sudden, when they have had the least expectation, and their hope hath been ready to give up the Ghost, they have met with Christ, and found him whom their Soul loveth; on a sudden the Veil of the Temple

ple hath been rent, and they have ſeen their Beloved in the Holy of Holies; on a ſudden the clouds have fled, their darkneſs hath paſſed away, and the light hath ſhined; the North-wind of trouble hath ceaſed, and the ſweet Southern Gales have blown upon them; I mean they have been under ſuch ſhinings and breathings of the Spirit, that they have ſeen and felt the preſence of Chriſt, and ſuch a ſweet ſenſe of his Love, as hath filled them with Soul-raviſhing Joy.

4. Chriſt doth manifeſt himſelf Seaſonably unto them that Love him. Though he doth not alwayes manifeſt himſelf when they moſt deſire, yet he doth manifeſt himſelf when they have moſt need, and then they have moſt need when they are moſt low, when they are moſt low in their Spirits, moſt poor and mean in their own eſteem, as well as moſt low in their condition through Affliction and Trouble; Humility and Patience under Affliction, doth make way for the Experience of Chriſt's manifeſtation; Chriſt doth many times reſerve his Cordials for the Fainting fits, and the ſweeteſt Conſolations in the diſcoveries of his Love for the time of the greateſt Adverſity; eſpecially,

cially, when the trouble is for his sake, he is graciously present; *John* had his Visions when he was Banished for the sake of Christ unto the Isle *Patmos*. And when all men forsook *Paul* at his answer before *Nero*, then the Lord came to him, stood by him and strengthned him.

Sect. V.

5. WHere doth Christ manifest himself unto them that love him? This is in the way of his Ordinances, there he doth walk, there he doth appear unto his People; sometimes Christ doth manifest himself in the way of private Ordinances, when they seek him in their Families, or in their Closets, when they speak of him in conference, or when they think of him in their Meditation and Contemplation; sometimes Christ doth manifest himself unto them that love him in the way of Publick Ordinances; in Publick Prayer or Fasting, in hearing of the Word, or when they are Feasting at his Table, especially in this last mentioned Ordinance Christ doth frequently manifest himself unto his Disciples most

ſweetly: At the Lords Table, the Lord doth appear; in breaking of Bread he diſcovers himſelf, as to the Diſciples that went to *Immaus*; in his Banquetting-houſe he gives them to feaſt on his Love; There are many who can ſay by experience, that if ever they met with Chriſt in their Lives, and in any Ordinance, they have met with him at the Sacrament, there he hath unveiled his face, there he hath revealed his Love, there he hath breathed upon them by his Spirit, there they have found and felt the Lord to be near.

SECT. VI.

I Come now to the Application: And here that I may to give to every one his Portion, I ſhall ſpeak, 1. To you that have no Love unto Chriſt: 2. To you that have ſome Love to Chriſt, but are without theſe Manifeſtations. 3. To you that both love Chriſt, and have Manifeſtations of his love unto you.

Uſe 1. The Firſt Uſe doth concern ſuch as have no love at all unto Chriſt: Chriſt will manifeſt himſelf unto them that

that love him, this is Childrens Bread, and doth not belong to you, because you do not belong unto Christ; this is a choise and most rich Priviledge, but you have nothing to do with it; *Procul ite Profani.* Avant all ye profane ones, all ye unclean ones, all ye ungodly ones, all Unbelievers whatsoever, who being without Faith, are also without Love to Christ; see that you come not neer to lay your unclean hands upon this most excellent Promise; never look for any discovery of Christs love unto you whilest you go on in wayes of Sin, whilest you are in your Natural Estate. I believe some of you may be ready to say, *What if Christ doth not manifest himself unto us? let us have our Honours and Dignity, let us have our Wealth and Plenty, let us have our Friends and Delights, and let who will look after those airy and fancifull Satisfactions in Christs Manifestations.* Sinners, is this your language either of tongue or heart? Let me tell you, one day you will sing another tune, you will be of another mind; one day you will acknowledge, that all the Happiness which you so eagerly pursued in the sweetest creature-enjoyments, was but a Fancy, that it was thin, light and airy; that it was

vain and empty, when all is fled away and left nothing behind but Stings and bitter Grief, but inward wounds, gripes, and dreads, upon the ſight of approaching Death, and under apprehenſions of approaching Wrath, and eternal Torments in Hell. Then what would you give for an Intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, and a well-grounded Perſwaſion of his ſpecial Love unto your Souls? Then the Manifeſtations of Chriſt will appear to be no airy thing, and that nothing beſides this can rationally ſupport your Souls when you come to the Borders of the Grave, and to the Confines of Eternity. And let me further tell you that have no love to Chriſt, that although Chriſt whileſt you are ſuch will never manifeſt himſelf unto you in a way of Love, yet there is a Day coming when he will Manifeſt himſelf unto you, but this Manifeſtation will be with a Vengeance, it will be in a way of moſt Furious anger; I mean, at the laſt day of Judgement, when Chriſt will be revealed from Heaven, not onely to thoſe that Love him, but alſo to thoſe that Hate him, for every eye ſhall then ſee him, and he will come in flaming Fire to take Vengeance upon you that have not obeyed this Goſpel-Precept, to Love him.

him. The Consideration of this should awaken you to fear and fly from Sin, which otherwise will be your ruine and eternal Perdition; and O that withall you would be perswaded to apply your selves unto the Lord Jesus Christ by Faith, that you may hereby have Interest in him, and in that great Salvation which he hath purchased for you, and which in the Gospel is freely tendred unto you! and this Faith in Christ would work Love to Christ, and put you in a capacity of these Manifestations of Christ's Love unto your Souls.

Sect. VII.

Use 2. THe second Use concerneth such of you as have some Love unto Christ, but are without these Manifestations; and there are two sorts of such: 1. Some of you never had these Manifestations. 2. Some of you have had these Manifestations, but have lost them.

1. Some of you never had these Manifestations of Christ's Love. It may be you are young and raw Christians, a little

while ago you were forward Scholars in the School of the Devil, and served divers lusts with all your might and strength; the Lord hath lately hedg'd up your way with thorns, hath opened your eyes to see your sins, and made you sensible of your danger, but as yet your eyes are not open as to any comfortable sight of your Saviour; Indeed Christ hath been revealed unto you as able and willing to save you, and you have been drawn by the Word and Spirit to take hold on him, and to give up your selves unto him; but as yet you are in the dark as to your Spiritual Estate; you are under doubts and fears of unsoundness and rottenness at heart, that you are Hypocrites, and shall fall away, as other Professors like your selves have done; you fear you shall one day perish by the hand of *Saul*, that the Devil and your own Lusts will be too hard for you, and prevail so far with you, as to pull you back into wayes of Sin, and thereby to pull you down into the bottomless Pit of Hell: This causeth a dread upon your spirits, and fearfull apprehensions of Gods wrath and future Vengeance; this fetcheth many a sad and heavy sigh from your breasts, many a brinish tear from your eyes, you

are

are troubled, bowed down greatly, and go mourning all the day: Yet you are resolved to give your attendance still unto Ordinances, and there to wait upon the Lord, and for the Lord; you are resolved, notwithstanding all discouragements, that you will be the Lords, though you know not whether he be yours; you are resolved that Christ shall have your hearts, and you will venture your Souls upon him, though you know not whether you are accepted by him. This may be a Use of Encouragement unto you; certainly you are such as love Christ, and are beloved by Christ, and Christ will manifest himself unto such as have such Love; let me tell you, that Christ is not far from you, whatever you may apprehend, though he be out of your sight, yet you are not out of his, his eye is upon you, and his heart is towards you; he hears all your sighs, he sees all your tears, he pities you, and sympathizeth with you in all your Griefs; he loves you, and ere long will let you know it; he is now preparing you for sweet discoveries of himself, and ere long he will give you those discoveries. If you follow on to seek him, he will certainly and may suddenly be found of you: And

who knows but this may be the time of Christ's manifesting his Love? It may be whilest you are Reading this Discourse, you may have a glimpse of his face, and hear his Voice saying unto you, *Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you.* Lift up the Hands that hang down, lift up the Heart that is cast down; Look up then dejected Soul, thy Saviour is before thee, open thine Eyes and look, look with the Eye of Faith, canst thou not see a marvellous Beauty in his countenance? dost thou not perceive some smiles in his Face, some Smiles upon thy Soul? Dost thou not feel his Spirit sweetly breathing upon thine heart, perswading thee, and giving thee a sweet sense of Christ's peculiar Love unto thee? Dost thou not perceive some inward knockings at the door of thine heart, and hear some inward callings? *Open to me, and I will come in and sup with thee*: This is the Voice of thy Beloved; make haste and open to him, open all the Faculties of thy Soul, lift up the Everlasting Gates to this King of Glory; send forth the Handmaids of thy Desires to invite the Lord in, let thy Faith take hold on him and usher him into thy Soul, and then embrace him in the Arms of thy

deareſt Love, and give him ſuch entertainment that he may abide with thee for ever.

2. There are others of you have had ſome manifeſtations of Chriſt unto you formerly, but you have loſt them: your beloved hath withdrawn himſelf and is gone, you call and he giveth no anſwer, you ſeek him, but you cannot find him. Time hath been when your Lord was preſent, and gave you Gracious viſits frequently, many a ſecret ſmile you have ſeen in his face, many a comfortable word you have had from his mouth, many a love-token you have received at his hand: Time hath been when you had your evidences written out fair and clean, with the Seal of the Spirit ſet unto them, and how exceedingly did you then rejoice in the ſenſe of Chriſt's love? how did you feaſt your ſelves upon his rich entertainment of Goſpel-priviledges which through him you were inveſted withal? And O the admirings which then you had of free Grace! O the ſweet meltings of heart in the kindly ſenſe of ſin! O the enlargements of deſire which you had in your Prayers! O the burnings of love to Chriſt which you have often felt in your boſomes! O the lively hopes which you had

had, and ineffable delight in hope of the Glory of God! But now there is a ſtrange decay within you of Grace, and Alteration as if you were not the ſame Men and Women as you were before. You have withdrawn your ſelves from Chriſt, and he hath withdrawn himſelf from your Souls: you have let down your watch, and the Devil hath got advantage againſt you by his devices, he hath watched his opportunity and entangled you in the ſnares of ſome ſins; whilſt you have heedleſly gone to the utmoſt confines of duty, and been upon the borders of ſin, the Devil hath ſent forth a ſquadron of temptations not with fiery darts, but with ſilken cords, which have treated and parlyed with you to entice and perſwade to go a little further, they have told you what pleaſant fruit doth grow within thoſe borders moſt ſweet and delicious to the taſte; that there are Silver and Golden Mines which you might quickly dig up, and find precious ſubſtance; that there you might have honour and eſteem, and what would you turn your back upon all theſe? would you be ſo nice and ſtrict as not to deſpenſe with a little duty, as not to ſtep over the hedge a little way, where the delights and advantage would be ſo great.

And

And if you have hesitated, they have told you that it was very disputable, whether the confines of duty did not reach beyond the place which they would bring you unto, propounding the example of others of the same Religious Profession, that have frequently gone so far, and why should you scruple: or if it were a transgression it was but a little transgression, they would not desire you to go far, and who is there that lives and doth not transgresse those bounds? and you might easily repent and find mercy if God were offended; you might quickly retire and return into your former limits; then whilst you have been parlying with temptations, the silken cords have been fastned about you, and e're you have been aware your have been drawn along, partly willing and partly unwilling, and enticed unto some kind of sins, and complyed with some kind of lusts, indulging your selves to give them satisfaction, whereby you have been beguil'd, and befool'd, whereby you have been secretly wounded and inwardly defiled; and thus your evidences for Heaven have been miserably blotted, so that now you are not able to read them. Time hath been when worldly Affections seemed to be mortified within you, to

be

be dead and buryed, many a ſore thruſt and wound you had given unto them, and how did they bleed and faint, and grew ſo weak that they ſeemed to be giving up the Ghoſt, and you have thought ſurely they would never ſtir much in you any more; and then your love to Chriſt was ſtrong and active, it did burn and flame within you, and O the zeal which you then had for your Maſters honour, and you ſeemed to have no intereſt to carry on in the world but the intereſt of Chriſt, and you minded not your own things upon your own account, but all your intereſts were ſwallowed up in the intereſt of Jeſus Chriſt, which you chiefly minded and cared for, and made every thing elſe to truckle under it, and to be ſubſervient unto it; but now your affections to Chriſt are ſtrangely cooled; if there be the fire of love to Chriſt ſtill within you, it is not fire in burning coals, or in a vehement flame, but it is a fire in a few ſcattered ſparks, and thoſe raked over that they give neither light nor heat, and are hardly, if at all, diſcernable by you; and your wordly Affections which ſeem'd to be dead, they have gotten Spirit and Life and Vigour, and Strength: O the eager deſire which you have after the world, and

the things in the world, and these accompanied with eager prosecution of the world, now the world hath your thoughts in contrivements about it, and the world hath your tongues in your most frequent discourse of it, now the world hath your hand and your time, but that which is worst of all, the world hath your heart too, the world hath justled Christ off of his Throne and for the present doth usurp his seat. And is it then a wonder if your beloved be offended that you should thus decline in your love, that your hearts should go a whoring from him unto the Creature, in your giving those affections unto any thing in the world which are his due? Hence it is that Christ hath shut up his countenance from you, or if he looks, it is with frowns upon you; you have lost your first love, and you have lost your first sights, and your first tastes of the Love of Christ; now your spiritual joys and comforts are fled out of sight, they are lost and gone, and the bare remembrance of them only doth remain, and whatever delights you have they are only such as come in at the door of sense, you have none at all that come in at the door of faith, and your sensual delights have expelled and banished your spiritu-

all;

all; now the rich Gospel-priviledges have not that savor and sweet relish with you as heretofore; your minding and savouring so much the Earth and Earthly things, hath disrelished your spiritual appetite. O the mischief which indulged sin hath done unto you! O the unfelt wounds, but so much the more deep and dangerous, which sin hath given you! O the defilements of sin in your Consciences, and the stains & blots which sin hath cast upon your profession! O the havock which sin hath made amongst your graces, and amongst your comforts! Leaves you have still of an outward profession, but where is your fruit to be found? If you have some fruit, is it not withered fruit, sour and ill-relished, not such ripe and mellow and sweet fruit as heretofore in your flourishing estate? Surely the Lord is at a great distance from such of you, and are there not too many such amongst you? And what need have you to remember whence you are to fallen, to ransack your hearts to find out your sins, to humble your selves deeply, to repent and grieve and mourn, to turn your laughter into weeping, and your joy into heavinesse, and to return unto the Lord speedily and do your first works,

other-

otherwiſe ſome ſearefull judgements are like to befall you, and the Lord may be even forced to awaken you with a vengeance, and make you a terrour unto your ſelves and unto all about you: Don't provoke the Lord, by your thus running away from him, to follow you with a ſtorm as he did *Jonas*, and to devour you in the floods and waves of dreadfull afflictions, that hereby he may reduce and reſtore you, and keep you from being drowned in utter perdition and eternal deſtruction. It may be the Lord hath ſcourged ſome of you for your faults with the rods of ſome croſſes and diſappointments, ſome outward loſſes and troubles; it may be he hath put bitterneſſe upon thoſe breaſts which you have been ſucking, and mingling gall in the cup of your pleaſures which you have been drinking; and you have begun to think of your evil wayes, and ſeen what an evil thing and bitter it is to backſlide from the Lord; and you have thought it was beſt with you when you were neareſt unto Chriſt. It may be God hath dealt with you as he telleth his backſliding people he would do with them, *Hoſ.* 2. 6, 7. *Behold I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall that ſhe ſhall not find her paths: And ſhe ſhall follow*

low after her Lovers, but she shall not overtake them, and she shall seek them, but she shall not finde them; Then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband, for then it was better with me than now. And now you are seeking after your Beloved, but he hath withdrawn himself from you, and seems to take no notice of you; you call and cry, and sigh, and weep, and lament, and complain, and seek, and wait, and yet he withholds from you all special discoveries of his Love: Possibly doubts may hence arise, and fears grow upon your spirits, and you are ready to sink, and sometimes are almost overwhelmed with inward trouble. Let this Doctrine be an encouragement to you still to seek diligently and wait patiently, for the Lord will manifest himself again unto you in his own time, which is the best time: He may try you for a while whether you will follow him in the dark, he may suffer you to wait some time for him, who have made him to wait so long time for you; But if you persevere to seek him diligently in his wayes, you shall finde that it will not be in vain. And what would you say, ye backsliding souls, if the Lord should manifest himself unto you at this time? would you

not

not abuse his kindness? if he should discover his Love to you again, would you not grow wanton and carnally secure? if he should now renew your evidences and give them fair written, and easie to be read by you, would you not blot them again by your sins? if he should now speak peace unto your Consciences, would you not again return unto folly? If he should now restore unto you the joyes of his salvation, and send down the Holy Ghost from Heaven to come unto you, to be your comforter and to dwell with you, would you not griev and quench the Spirit and provoke him to another retirement, and more dreadfull withdrawings than before? It may be the Lord will try you; it may be the Lord may draw near and make some discovery of himself, and discovery of his Love unto you: it may be the Lord may look kindly now upon you, and secretly by his Spirit speak kindly unto you: you are now looking and longing, and hoping, and waiting, possibly this may be the time of your seeing his face, and the smiles that are there, of your feeling the sweet sheddings abroad of his Love into your hearts by his Spirit, at least he may give you a glimpse, a glance, a little taste, such as shall

raviſh your hearts. However wait for him, and with earneſt deſires and importunate requeſts, plead with him for his returns, and theſe manifeſtations, and that in ſuch kinde of Language as this: *Come Lord Jeſus, Come quickly, make haſte O my beloved, make haſte to my ſoul that thirſteth for thee, as the parched land after the ſweet ſhowers that fall from heaven, as the hunted Hart after the cooling and refreſhing ſtreams of the water-brooks. O when ſhall I drink of thoſe waters of Life which thou haſt to give, who art the fountain and ſpring from whence they flow? when ſhall I taſte again how good thou art? when ſhall I ſee thee again, and feed, and feaſt my ſoul again with thy love? when Lord, O when wilt thou come unto me? wilt thou caſt off for ever? wilt thou be favourable no more? haſt thou in anger ſhut up thy bowels? ſhall this cloud alwayes ſit upon thy brow? ſhall this curtain alwayes be drawn before thy face? Truth Lord, I have grievouſly ſinned, and greatly offended thee; but have I not, do I not truly repent? is there any thing in the world ſo grievous unto me as the remembrance of my miſcariages? I acknowledge my offence, my folly and horrid ingratitude; but ſhall my ſins be alwayes a wall of ſeparation between me and my beloved?*

are not thy bowels tender? are not thy mercies plentifull? is there not forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared and the more dearly beloved? dost thou not forgive freely without upbraiding? hast thou not promised to be found of all them that diligently seek thee? and didst thou ever fail in thy word unto any? and shall I be the first? are not the desires of my Soul after thee, and that Chiefly, and that Earnestly? Is there not dearth and drought in all things beneath thy self, nothing that can give me satisfaction? have I not renounced the World for my Portion? Thou mightest send me to the World for help and comfort, to the World which I have over-earnestly desired and loved, and over-eagerly sought for contentment and happiness in; But is this thy wont, and thy way, and the manner of thy dealing with them that are grieved for their Sin, and ashamed of their Folly? Hast thou not promised to manifest thy self unto them that love thee? and do not I love thee? dost not thou who knowest all things, know that I love thee? though my Love be imperfect, yet is it not true? though it be weak, yet is it not sincere? else whence are these desires after Thee above all Persons and Things in the World? are not these the product of true

Love?

Love? and wilt thou not make good thy Promiſe then, to manifeſt thy ſelf unto me? and if I had the Manifeſtations of thy Love, would not my love grow and encreaſe hereby? Should I not love the more dearly and ſtrongly, if I had clear diſcoveries, and were perſwaded aſſuredly of thy love unto me? Truth Lord, I am altogether unworthy of ſuch a favour; but didſt thou ever beſtow this favour upon any for their deſerts? are not all thy Gifts free? and am not I as capable as any of Free-grace? the more unworthy, the more I ſhall admire thee; the more is forgiven, I ſhall love the more; And may I not now have a taſte of thy Loving-kindneſs? Haſten my Beloved, O haſten unto me, and be as a Roe upon the Mountains of Spices! Do not veil thy face from me any longer, do not conceal thy love, but now, O now draw near, and make me exceeding glad in the light of thy Countenance, and in the beauty of thy Face, and ſmiles thereof. Such deſires and pleadings as theſe might prevail with the Lord forthwith to return again unto you, and to ſay, *Well Soul, I have heard thy Prayer, thy breathing, and thy cry; thy pleadings have prevailed with me, and I am now come unto thee, and be it to thee according*

to

to thy Desires; Come Soul, and look up, lift up thine eyes, and see, Here I am, Behold me, Behold me; this day I am come to bring glad tydings of great Joy unto thee. I assure thee, that I am thine, and all mine is thine, and thou art mine, and shalt be mine for ever. And what words can sound so sweet and yield such comfort, as these or such like, spoken by the Spirit unto the hearts of those from whom Christ is withdrawn?

SECT. VIII.

Use 3. THe Third Use doth concern you that do love Christ, and have the Manifestations of his Love to your Souls: Three things be exhorted unto; 1. Rejoyce in the Lord. 2. Admire his Free Grace. 3. Labour to retain these Manifestations.

1. You that have the Manifestations of the Love of Christ, Rejoyce in the Lord; of all Persons in the world, you have most reason to rejoyce, you are the happiest men and women alive. It is not Wealth

Wealth in the greateſt abundance which can make men happy, the richeſt Perſons have often thorns of the greateſt diſcontent to pierce their hearts, and Stings of the greateſt guilt to wound their Conſciences: It is not the higheſt Honour and worldly Dignity which can make men happy; the vileſt men are often exalted, and thoſe that are in the Higheſt places, are in the moſt Slippery places, from whence they are ſoon caſt down into deſtruction, and whatever ſecurity they have in Life, yet they are uſually conſumed utterly with Terrours when grim Death doth appear and ſummon them to depart. It is not the ſweeteſt ſenſual Delight which can make men happy; Vanity is the Attendant, and Vexation of Spirit is the Conſequent of all thoſe pleaſures that are ſenſual and ſinfull, which are the ſeed alſo of Pain and Everlaſting torment: Such onely can be ſaid to be happy in truth, as are really united and related unto Jeſus Chriſt, and through him reconciled unto God, and entituled unto the Kingdom of Heaven; but you are the moſt happy, and have reaſon to take the moſt comfort, who have not onely Relation unto Chriſt, but alſo the Manifeſtations of him; who know that

Chriſt

Christ is yours, and you are his, that Christ loveth you, and that his Love, as it had no beginning, so it is without changing, and will know no ending. If you know that Christ loveth you, you have reason to rejoyce, because hereby you may know assuredly that you are Elected, that God by an eternal and unchangeable Decree hath chosen you, when he hath chosen so few of fallen Men, and none of the fallen Angels, and when there was not the least foreseen Motive to induce him hereunto; the assurance of this may yield unexpressible sweetness unto you. If you know that Christ loveth you, you may know assuredly your Effectual Calling, Conversion, and wonderfull Union unto Christ; and O what matter of Joy is it to think, how God hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light! how he hath delivered you out of the Snare of the Devil, and the bonds of your own Lusts, and set your Souls at liberty! how he hath wrought a Miracle in your first Resurrection from the Grave and spiritual death of Sin, & put forth the same power in your New Creation & change of your Natures, as in his first Creation of the World! how he hath dissolved and made a di-

a divorce between your hearts and your ſins, and ſo wonderfully United and eſpouſed you unto the Lord Jeſus; and by this Conjunction and Relation given you an Intereſt in all the Priviledges which Chriſt hath purchaſed. If you know that Chriſt doth love you, you may know aſſuredly that you are Juſtified through his Merits and Mediation, and O what matter of Joy is this, to think that all your ſins Original and Actual, are pardoned, that none can lay any ſin to your charge, becauſe God hath juſtified you! that there is none that ſhall condemn you, becauſe Chriſt hath loved you, and out of Love hath dyed for you, and is now making Interceſſion for you at the right hand of God, *Rom.* 8. 33,34. to be acquitted from all Guilt, and no more lyable unto future wrath than if you had never offended; and when you had no Righteouſneſs of your own, to be accepted as perfectly Righteous in the ſight of God, through the Imputation of Chriſt's perfect Righteouſneſs! Who have reaſon to rejoyce, if you have not reaſon? If you know that Chriſt loveth you, you may aſſuredly ſay, that you are the Sons and Daughters of the Lord Almighty; and will you not rejoyce, when

of Children of the Devil, Children of Disobedience, Children of Wrath, you are made the Children of God, the Glorious Jehovah, that is the Supream Sovereign and King of the whole World, and when you have not an empty Name onely, but are intituled to all the Priviledges of his Children? If you know that Christ doth love you, you may know assuredly that he will keep alive his Interest in you, preserve his Grace in your hearts, and enable you to persevere in Faith and Holiness, notwithstanding all the alluring Temptations which you may meet withall in the World, notwithstanding all the Suggestions and Oppositions of Sathan, and notwithstanding all the powerfull workings of your remaining lusts and corruptions, all which do combine together, and use all their power and policy (which is great) to extirpate your Grace, to draw you unto sin, to entice or force you out of the wayes of God; and O what matter of comfort is it, that the Lord Jesus who loveth you, hath undertaken for you, to keep you in his hand, and by his unseen but mighty power to enable you to resist and overcome, to hold on in his wayes, and hold out unto the end, so that you may tri-

umph with the Apoſtle, and ſay, as *Rom.* 8. 35, 37. *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? Nay, in all theſe things we are more than conquerours through him that loved us.* And you may be perſwaded as *Paul* was, and greatly rejoyce therein, that, as *v.* 38, 39. *Neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor heighth, nor depth, nor any other Creature ſhall be able to ſeparate you from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus your Lord.* If you know that Chriſt doth love you, you may know aſſuredly that your Prayers have audience with God, that whatever imperfections and ſinfull mixtures they have, yet that they are mingled with the ſweet Incenſe of Chriſt's Merits, through which they are perfumed and accepted; and what comfort is this, that whatever you ask of the Father in the Name of your dear Lord Jeſus, if it be for his Glory and your good, he will certainly procure it for you. To conclude, If you know that Chriſt doth love you, you may know aſſuredly that you are Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, and

that as certainly as you are alive, you shall attain eternal Felicity in the Beatifical Vision and Fruition of your Lord; as certainly as you have the first Fruits, so certainly shall you have the Harvest; as certainly as you have the Earnest, so certainly shall you have the Inheritance; as certainly as you see Christ by Faith here, so certainly shall you have the Beatifical Vision of his Person and Glory in Heaven, and be made perfectly happy in the eternal and full Enjoyment of him; O how should you then rejoyce in the Lord, rejoyce in his Person, rejoyce in his Love, rejoyce in his Benefits, rejoyce in what you have, and rejoyce in what you hope to have by him; rejoyce in what you see now, and feel now, and taste now; and rejoyce in the foresights and foretastes of your Happiness to come. *Rejoyce in the Lord alwayes, and again I say Rejoyce.*

2. If you have Manifestations of Christs Love unto you, Admire his Free Grace in these Manifestations; as *Joh.* 14. 22. when Christ had promised to manifest himself unto such as love him, *Judas* (not *Iscariot*, he was the Traytor, and had no true love to his Master, but *Judas*

the Brother of *James*) ſaith to him, *Lord how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thy ſelf unto us, and not unto the World?* This Queſtion is not a Queſtion of Enquiry concerning the Way and Manner how Chriſt would manifeſt himſelf unto them, but it is a Queſtion of Admiration concerning the Thing; Τί γέγονεν ὅτι ἡμῖν μέλλεις ἐμφανίζειν σεαυτὸν. What is done? or What is come to paſs? How is it? or Whence is it? His Queſtion did not expect an Anſwer, neither do we find any to it, but onely expreſſed his Wonder that Chriſt ſhould manifeſt himſelf unto them. And how ſhould you wonder then that the Lord Jeſus ſhould manifeſt himſelf unto you! That the Lord Jeſus, whoſe Name is Wonderfull, and hath ſo many Wonders in him, a Perſon of ſo great Eminency and Excellency, who hath ſuch a Crown of Glory upon his Head, ſuch Robes of Glory upon his Back, and on the Veſture of his Garment and his Thigh a Name written, *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*; that this moſt excellent Perſon ſhould manifeſt himſelf unto You, ſuch as You, when he conceals himſelf from the greateſt Princes of the Earth, who by their Intereſt, Authority and Influence might that highly promote his Glory, he ſhould

ſhould manifeſt himſelf unto You, who for the moſt part are low and mean, poor and deſpiſed in the World; that when he hideth himſelf from moſt of the Wiſe and Prudent, and great Scholars in the world, who by their Parts and Learning might magnifie his Name, and ſpread his Fame, he ſhould manifeſt himſelf unto you, who for the moſt part are perſons of mean parts and Education; that when Chriſt hideth himſelf from many Moraliſts, who have eſcaped the groſſer Pollutions which are in the World, he ſhould reveal and manifeſt himſelf unto you, ſome of whom before Converſion were notoriouſly guilty of moſt foul ſins; that when Chriſt manifeſteth himſelf unto ſo Few, that you ſhould be in the Number of thoſe Few; how many wonders are here! That this Glorious Perſon ſhould ſend down another Glorious Perſon, I mean the Holy Ghoſt, from Heaven, (which is more than if he had ſent down all the Glorious Angels which are in Heaven) to make this Diſcovery of himſelf unto you; That he ſhould make uſe of the Fooliſhneſſe of Preaching as a Means to effect this great thing, that while a man of like paſſions and infirmities with your ſelves is

opening and applying the Scriptures, the Lord by this means should unveil himself and open the treasures of his Love unto you: that your humble fervent and believing prayers here on Earth should ascend up to the throne of God that is in Heaven, and move the Lord Jesus that is there to come down thence, though not in person, yet by his Spirit; that prayer should open heavens gate, and have such a prevalency for this manifestation and discovery of Christ; though the best prayers of the best men are not without mixture of sin: that whilst you are sitting at the Lords table, the Lord himself should give you a visit, and whilst you are eating bread and wine at the Sacrament, he should give you to see and feel and taste himself and his Love by your spiritual senses. It was wonderful humiliation in Christ that when he could have commanded the most stately Horses, yea Lions, Elephants, or Unicorns, he should ride to *Jerusalem* upon an Ass, and when Christ hath the Chariots of so many thousand glorious Angels, which he could command and ride triumphantly in, when he makes discovery of himself unto his people, that he should make use of the Chariots of so mean Ordinances in the discovery of himself

ſelf unto you; how many wonders are here? how ſhould you admire his wonderful Grace and Love, and ſay, *what is man that thou art thus mindful of him, or any of the ſons of men, that thou ſhouldſt thus viſit them? what are we unworthy wretches? and why ſhouldſt thou manifeſt thy ſelf unto us? even ſo dear Jeſus becauſe it ſeemed good in thy ſight*: eſpecially you have reaſon to wonder and admire at the manifeſtations which Chriſt hath given of himſelf and love to you, when you conſider the excellency of theſe manifeſtations and diſcoveries beyond all other diſcoveries. If you have ſeen the moſt rare works of Art and Human Invention, the moſt curious Pictures, the moſt ſtately Edifices, or any other works of the moſt ingenious contrivement: If you have viewed the works of nature which do far exceed thoſe of Art, the beautiful frame of the Heavens over your heads, and the glorious Luminaries of Sun, Moon, and Stars, in their wonderful light and motion; the Earth under your feet when it hath got on its beſt attire, when the fields are clothed with graſs in the Spring, or enriched with corn in the ſummer; If you have ſeen the moſt pleaſant Brooks and Streams, and Fountains of water, the moſt ſtately

Groves

Groves with lofty and broad ſhadowing Trees; the moſt flouriſhing Orchards, moſt richly laden with variety of the moſt delicious fruit; the moſt delightfull Gardens with variety of the choiſeſt Flowers caſting forth the moſt fragrant ſmell; If you have ſeen all ſorts of Birds, and fowls in the Air, All ſorts of Beaſts on the Earth, All ſorts of fiſh in the Sea; If you have ſeen the moſt goodly men that ever were born; the faireſt women, with the moſt ſparkling beauty: What is the ſight of all theſe things, and the moſt lovely objects that ever were viſible to the eye of the body? the ſight of all is but mean and contemptible and not worthy to be named in compariſon with the ſight of the Lord Jeſus by the eye of the Soul; Whatever beauty and lovelineſs there is to be found in any, or in all viſible Creatures, there is infinitely more beauty and lovelineſs in Jeſus Chriſt; all viſible beauty is but a ſhadow, in Chriſt there is ſubſtantial beauty; all viſible beauty is fading, like the flower that ſoon withereth, like the leaf that ſoon fadeth, but in Chriſt there is permanent beauty; all viſible beauty is inferiour and mean, yea deformity compared with Chriſt's tranſcendent lovelineſs. There is no diſcovery to the eye of the

mind

mind comparable to the discovery of Christ unto the eye of Faith; the light of Nature in the greatest improvement of it, is but a weak and dim light in comparison with the spiritual light of the knowledge of Christ; no light so clear and bright, no light so pure and sweet, as that which makes discovery of the Lord Jesus unto the Soul. This discovery of Christ doth dispel clouds from the Mind, and exhale lusts from the Heart; it doth brighten the understanding and cleanse the Affections; it doth warm the Heart with love, and fill the Heart with comfort; it quiets the Conscience and purifies it; it gives a most sweet peace and tranquillity to the spirit, and withall brings in such spiritual joy, as is unspeakable and full of Glory. O how then should you admire the Riches of the Grace, and Kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ unto you! that he should give unto you this discovery of himself, when the discovery is so admirable, so excellent, so desirable, so useful, and which doth lift you up into a far higher degree of excellency, than the otherwise most accomplisht persons in the world, that are without this discovery.

3dly. To conclude, If you have these manifesta-

nifestations of Christ and his love unto you, labor to retain these manifestations. In a word, take heed of indulging your selves in any sins, which may provoke him to depart from you, and withdraw the sweet and comfortable influences of his Spirit; and be diligent in the use of all means and ordinances, publick, private and secret, whereby you may maintain daily Communion and Fellowship with him.

FINIS.

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